

Hafa Adai!

Girl Scouts sold 1,300 boxes of cookies. PAGE 3
LB employees given 14-hour notice on 64-hour schedule. PAGE 5

75¢

Saipan Tribune

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MONDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2020

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By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com

Although the CNMI economy grew in 2016 and 2017, it plunged in 2018 due to a sharp drop in tourist spending and casino gaming revenue following Super Typhoon Yutu's severe destruction in October 2018,

GAO: CNMI's economy grew in 2016, 2017, dropped in 2018

according to a new U.S. Government Accountability Office report.

Citing CNMI tax data, GAO's 2020 study found that the ratio of the U.S. work-

See GAO on Page 4

- » Ratio of U.S., foreign workers in the CNMI remained close to 50%; casino revenue dropped over 50% in 2018
- » Yutu's devastation caused sharp drop in tourist spending, casino gambling revenue

Asiana to suspend evening flights for 2 days

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com

Asiana Airlines notified the Commonwealth Ports Authority last Friday that they would

be suspending two of their evening flights to the CNMI for just two days due to low passenger loads.

In an interview with CPA

» Flights will resume on Feb. 20

board chair Kimberly King-Hinds last Friday, Asiana Airlines confirmed they would be suspending the eve-

ning flights for Feb. 18 and 19 because of low passenger loads.

"We just got a phone call this afternoon that [Asiana]

See ASIANA on Page 4



Sumo at the beach

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com

The beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan was transformed into a makeshift dohyo last

Saturday, with a select group of children enjoying a rare treat—a demonstration of

sumo wrestling.

The highly ritualized and

See SUMO on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Roller skating, usually associated with sunny Los Angeles, has arrived on Saipan.

PAGE 13



ASIA

China reported Sunday a drop in new virus cases for the third straight day.

PAGE 15



FOCUS

Dwindling crowds in religiously diverse places of worship underscore the extent of the coronavirus scare.

PAGE 17



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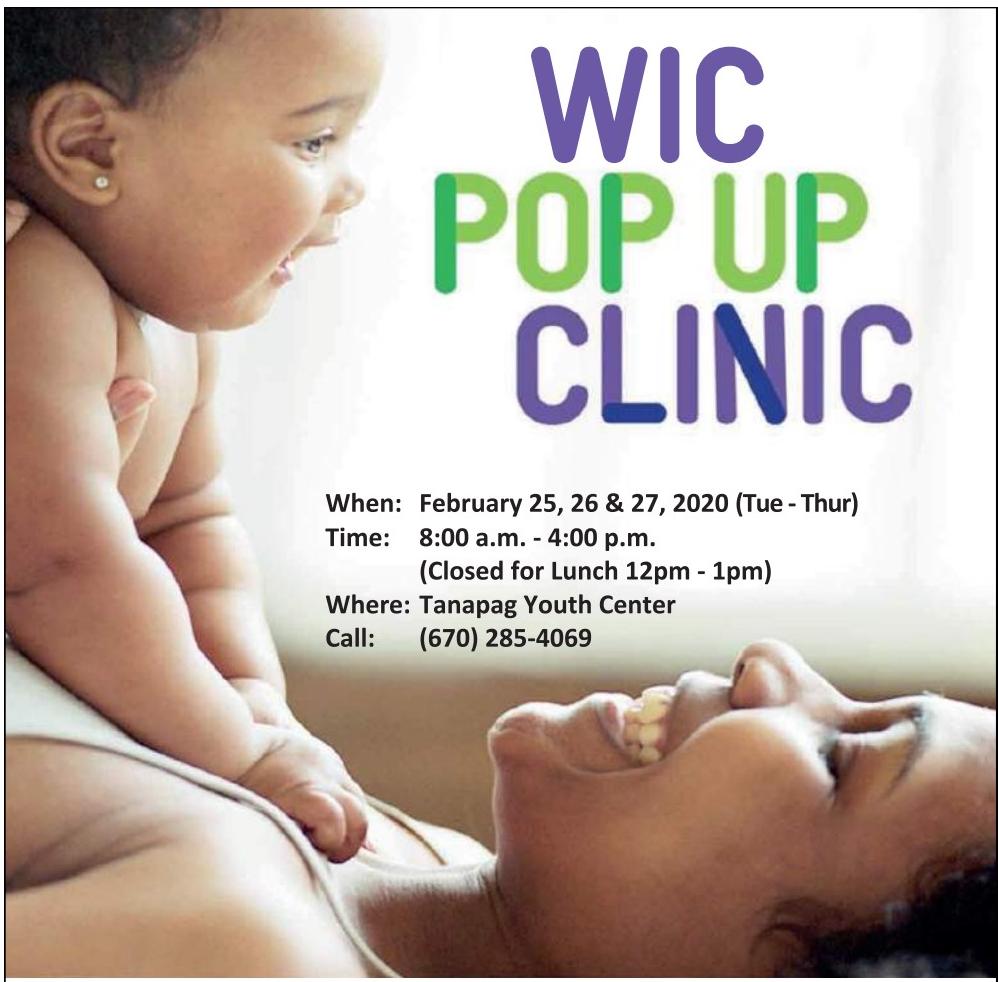


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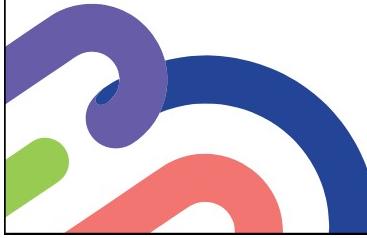
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WIC POP UP CLINIC

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"This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This project was supported by Grant 7NM700NM5 CFDA 10.557 from USDA and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). The contents above are solely the responsibility of CHCC and do not necessarily represent the official views of USDA."



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Local

CPA board OKs 72 hours effective March 1

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
 kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
 REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority board of directors unanimously voted yes to the recommended 72-hour work schedule last Friday and it will officially take effect on March 1.

During a CPA emergency board meeting last Friday, all seven board members agreed to the recommendation to implement a 72-hour work schedule across-the-board. Board chair Kimberlyn-King-Hinds said this would take effect March 1.

"All seven board members voted yes, no one wants to cut hours but it's just the reality of

the situation," she said.

Board members Ramon Tebuteb, Joseph Diaz, Roman Tudela, Pete Reyes, Thomas Villagomez, Barries Toves, and King-Hinds were present last Friday.

Aside from the eight-hour cut, the board also agreed to freeze all travel that is not reimbursable or required by federal regulations, a 25% cut on operations, freeze on all new hires, no promotions, and no merit increases.

"This is steep for a 24-hour operation here at the port. We also have to work to conserve utilities and gas consumption with the vehicles. Also, everyone is going to stay on their current salary for some time,"

she said.

All austerity measures agreed upon by the board was made effective immediately, excluding the new work schedule.

King-Hinds said these austerity measures are subject to change depending on additional flight cancellations or suspensions, passenger loads, and more.

"So [our] austerity measures assume a certain condition that only these four airlines who have suspended will be suspended until the end of the fiscal year; however, should they come back online, we're going to go back to the board and revisit the eight-hour cut.

See CPA on Page 4

COME AND BE BLESSED!

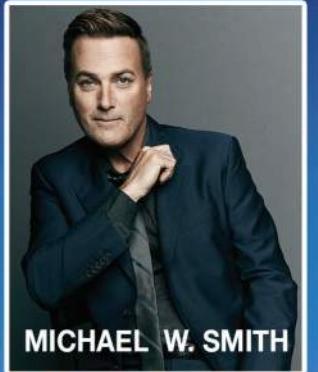


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Girl Scouts sold 1,300 boxes of cookies

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Island Girl Scouts' first cookie sale on the island last Feb. 15 was clearly a runaway success, with 1,300 boxes of Girl Scout cookies being sold out.

It was a very exciting and historic day for the NMI Girl Scouts since this was the first time in the CNMI that the Girl Scouts cookies have been sold to the community, said Michelle Sablan, cookie manager for the NMI Girl Scouts.

By the afternoon of last Saturday, most of the cookies were sold out. Sablan said she is so proud with how well the NMI Girl Scouts did with selling and interacting with each customer. She also lauded the troop leaders and volunteers who also helped to make the event a success.

"It's very important that the girls learn entrepreneurship and leadership [at a young age] because it helps them with their interpersonal communication skills, fostering creativity, and critical thinking, which are all important to cultivating life skills," said Sablan.

She said the young members of the NMI Girl Scout have been busy preparing for the past few weeks and they had a cookie rally at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan in Garapan last Jan. 12. The girl scouts learned about the different cookies and got to taste all the flavors that were offered at the cookie rally.

According to Sablan, they were about to get their shipment of Girl Scout cookies through the Army and Air Force Exchange Service Troop Store, with the help of the USA Girl Scouts Overseas and in collaboration with Little Brownie Bakers and AAFES.

Among the cookie flavors that were available were the thin mints, which are crisp wafers covered in a chocolate coating with a natural oil of peppermints; trefoils, which is a traditional shortbread cookies; s'mores that have a chocolate and marshmallow filling in between two graham crackers; samosas, which are a crisp cookies coated with caramel, sprinkled with coconut and striped with dark chocolate coating; tagalongs, crispy cookies layered with peanut butter and covered with a rich chocolate coating; do-si-dos, crunchy oatmeal sandwich cookies with a creamy peanut butter filling; and the newest addition to the Girl Scout cookies, lemon-ups, which are crispy lemon cookies.

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MITSUBISHI

GAO**From Page 1**

ers to foreign workers in the CNMI remained close to 50% from 2014 through 2018, with U.S. workers making up 49% of the workforce in 2018.

U.S. workers include U.S. citizens and nationals and citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. GAO said current available data does not allow for the identification for all persons lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

The Northern Mariana Islands U.S. Workforce Act of 2018 included a provision for GAO to examine the ratio of U.S. workers to other workers over the five previous calendar years in the CNMI.

The GAO report examines recent economic trends in the CNMI through 2018, and recent trends in the composition of the CNMI workforce from 2001 through 2018.

GAO International Affairs and Trade director David B. Gootnick prepared the report.

GAO said the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the CNMI's gross domestic product grew 28.4% in 2016 and 25.5% in 2017, which reflected continued growth in visitor spending, particularly for casino no gaming.

The GDP, however, fell by 20% in 2018, GAO said, with a sharp drop in tourist spending and casino gambling revenues following Yutu's destruction.

GAO said that, according to BEA, revenue from casino gambling dropped over 50% in 2018.

GAO cited that the parent company of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC warned shareholders and potential investors that it expected to post a loss for the first six months of 2019, compared with a profit for the same period in 2018.

GAO said IPI's independent auditor also concluded that the financial information for the first six months of 2019 might cast significant doubts on the ability of the company to continue as a going concern.

CPA**From Page 2**

Our priority is to restore salaries for people," she said.

The CPA airport and financial

ASIANA**From Page 1**

will be suspending their Feb. 18 and 19 flights and these are the evening flights and will resume on Feb. 20 due to low passenger loads," she said.

King-Hinds explained that Asiana assured CPA that they would return to their normal schedule on Feb. 20.

"[Asiana] stated that they are going to resume on Feb. 20. I think what they're doing is moving travelers to another day so they can have a full load," she said.

According to King-Hinds, low passenger loads is unfortunately a

On workers, GAO said the size of the workforce grew each year from 2014 through 2017, before contracting by almost 2,000 workers in 2018.

For 2018, the Department of Homeland Security approved about 9,000 CNMI-Only Transitional Worker (CW-1) foreign worker permits, and approved more than 11,000 permits for 2019.

GAO said the Northern Marianas Long-Term Residents Relief Act of June 2019 established a new category of long-term residents in the CNMI, assuming they met certain qualifications.

Applicants under this category must have been lawfully present in the CNMI on the date of the passage of this law on Dec. 31, 2018, and under the immigration laws of the U.S.

The applicant must have resided continuously and lawfully in the CNMI from Nov. 29, 2009, through the date of enactment of the law, must not be a citizen of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or Palau, and must meet additional qualifications.

On economy trends, GAO said the CNMI's GDP, adjusted for inflation, grew every year from 2012 to 2017, but declined in 2018.

GDP, in 2018 inflation-adjusted dollars, grew from \$1.022 billion in 2015, to \$1.311 billion in 2016, and \$1.646 billion in 2017, before contracting to \$1.323 billion in 2018.

BEA estimates that the CNMI's GDP, adjusted for inflation, increased by 28.4% in 2016 and 25.5% in 2017. BEA attributes this economic growth to exports and services, which reflected continued growth in visitor spending, particularly for casino no gaming.

In 2018, inflation-adjusted GDP fell by 20%, which reflected decreases in exports and services and private fixed investment.

According to BEA, exports of services decreased 39%, due to a drop in visitor spending, in particular spending on casino gambling where revenues fell over 50% in 2018.

GAO said a period of growth in visitor arrivals—from about 228,000 in fiscal year 2011 to more than 653,000 in fiscal year 2017—was soon followed by a drop in visitor

committees earlier reported an overall projected loss of \$3.9 million, including revenue loss from flights and others. Specifically, revenue loss from the four China flights was at an estimated \$2.2 million.

Earlier this month, four airlines

worldwide trend at the moment, especially with the outbreak of the novel coronavirus that has instilled fear in people around the world.

"People are just scared to travel and being an economy that is completely reliant on the tourists arriving and spending their money here, and planes coming here, we're in for some serious hard times and people have to take a seriously hard look in terms of how to conserve finances at this point in time," she said.

King-Hinds said the issue with Asiana suspending two flights in two days is a clear indication of just how uncertain times are for everyone.

"As we're sitting here discussing austerity measures, there's still

arrivals in fiscal year 2018 to about 607,000 and in fiscal year 2019 to less than 425,000.

According to BEA, the decline in visitors in early fiscal year 2019 was attributable to Yutu, which devastated the CNMI in October 2018. In November 2018, following Yutu, visitor arrivals in the CNMI plummeted from the previous month's total of 32,108 to 5,595. This drop also represented an 88% decline from November 2017, when 48,039 visitors arrived in the CNMI.

The composition of visitors by country of residence has also significantly shifted since 2005.

Data from the Marianas Visitors Authority shows that the decline in Japanese arrivals from fiscal years 2005 to 2019 was offset by the increase in arrivals from China and South Korea.

Japanese arrivals declined from about 376,000 in 2005 (71% of total visitors) to about 12,000 in 2019 (3%).

South Korean arrivals increased from about 65,000 in 2005 (12%) to about 192,000 in 2019 (45%).

Chinese arrivals increased from about 32,000 in 2005 (6%) to 186,000 in 2019 (44%).

The CNMI's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2019 Update indicates the visa-free access to Chinese visitors serves as the linchpin for the CNMI casino investment.

Several federal agencies have investigated and cited the casino operator IPI and its construction contractors. GAO said that IPI and its contractors have been fined for unfair labor practices.

GAO said that, on April 29, 2019, IPI released its 2018 Annual Report, which independent auditors found that IPI has incurred a net loss of almost \$3 billion Hong Kong dollars, or about \$379 million U.S. dollars, and had accumulated current liabilities greater than this amount, for calendar year 2018.

GAO said the auditors concluded that these conditions, along with others noted in the report, "indicate the existence of a material uncertainty, which may cast significant doubt on the operator's ability to

that cater to the Chinese market—Sichuan Airlines, China Eastern Airlines, Beijing Capital Airlines, and Hong Kong Express—suspended their flights for the remainder of the fiscal year due to the novel coronavirus outbreak.

a great deal of uncertainty in terms of whether the numbers we have adopted today are going to hold moving forward, given flights right now being so uncertain," she said.

In a previous interview, King-Hinds also wanted to clarify, in light of recent rumors, that Asiana will only be canceling their seasonal flights starting March 1, but it is not because of the novel coronavirus.

"Seasonally [Asiana] provides extra flights and so they provided extra afternoon flights for the winter season. Winter season is coming to an end and because it's coming to an end, they're back to normal schedule. They are just following procedure," she said.

continue in business."

On Aug. 30, 2019, IPI released its 2019 Interim Report, in which an independent auditor noted that during the six-month period ending June 30, 2019, IPI incurred a net loss of almost \$1.9 billion Hong Kong dollars, or more than \$240 million U.S. dollars. The auditor included the same warning of a material uncertainty reported in the 2018 Annual Report.

On Nov. 7, 2019, IPI posted an announcement to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange that it has assisted in an investigation at the request of local enforcement authorities, and provided relevant information and documents as required by enforcement authorities.

On workforce trends, between 2014 and 2018, the ratio of the U.S. to foreign workers in the CNMI re-

mained close to 50%, according to CNMI Department of Finance tax data that identified the citizenship of workers.

In 2018, GAO said, U.S. workers constituted 49% of the workforce. The size of the CNMI workforce grew every year from 2014 to 2017 before contracting by about 2,000 workers, or 5.6% in 2018, according to CNMI tax data.

While the ratio between U.S. workers and foreign workers has remained steady over the past five years, the number and share of foreign workers in the overall CNMI workforce fell significantly from 2001 through 2018.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

SUMO**From Page 1**

ancient sport of sumo wrestling showed off its lighter and goofier side, with two professional sumo wrestlers from the prestigious Tomozuna stable doing a demonstration that delighted a select group of students and their parents.

Champion wrestlers from the Tomozuna stable graced the event: Tomozuna owner and *shunin*, Kyokutenho, and best rank *maegashira* Kyokutaisei Takuya, Kyokushuho Koki, and Asahisho Kota. Maehashira is the highest salaried rank of a sumo wrestler.

Bringing sumo wrestlers to Saipan—as part of Hyatt Regency Saipan's celebration of its upcoming 40th anniversary this year—was the idea of Kobe Portopia Hotel Corp. president and owner Hitoshi Nakauchi, whose company owns Hyatt Regency Saipan.

"...because Hyatt has been here for so many years, Mr. Nakauchi wants the children to see and understand the Japanese culture. He believes that the children are our future and since Japan and Saipan have a rich history together, Mr. Nakauchi wants that connection to stay alive," said Hyatt general manager Nick Ishikawa.

"Sumo wrestling is a complicated society in Japan as they undergo so much discipline and dedication to the sport. ...It is difficult to organize and sponsor any private sumo wrestler appearances, and have them travel

outside of Japan. ...Now that we have them here on Saipan is a wonderful opportunity for them to meet children and enjoy the beauty of the islands," he added.

Before the sumo wrestling exhibition, families and guests were treated to a freshly cooked "Chankonabe," a Japanese hot pot that is included in a sumo wrestler's diet. According to Isao Usui, sales manager of the group, Chankonabe is packed with nutritious ingredients that help sumo wrestlers maintain their strength and physique.

"It is filled with different kinds of vegetables and tons of protein like pork and chicken broth. This well-balanced meal is traditionally eaten by sumo wrestlers but also enjoyed at home or some restaurants," he said.

"This is a good way of introducing the sumo wrestler's way of life to the people of Saipan. ...We have been here four to five times in the past and it was stopped because there were no more flights from Japan. But now we have direct flight again through Skymark Airlines [and] we are happy to be back," he added.

Even with the renewal of Hyatt's land lease with the CNMI government still up in the air, Ishikawa said that the CNMI can expect more community events from the Hyatt this year. "...Our top responsibilities are to serve our guests and continue to be a community partner. ...We only offer 100% service," he said.

"Tourism is the only industry on this island, so it is upon us to fulfill that important role to support this industry."

FBI agents there that morning.

An employee at IPI's VIP and purchasing office located at Vestcor said no FBI agents went to their office.

It is not clear whether the FBI indeed searched one of the units earlier that day and then left.

Meanwhile, a source disclosed over the weekend that the U.S. Attorney's Office is still working through the materials that the FBI seized (not Friday's raid) in connection with its ongoing investigation against Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and several other persons.

The source said documents are being provided to the FBI and the U.S. Attorney's Office per the subpoena to all the people covered in the investigation.

FBI**From Page 1**

housing, Vestcor Village, was raided Friday by the FBI and the Office of the Public Auditor. The subject of the raid is allegedly an IPI finance division employee.

The website posted a photo showing a man wearing an OPA jacket talking to someone, while a woman was standing next to the door of one of the units at Vestcor Village on Capital Hill.

Saipan Tribune checked the Vestcor Village last Friday past 11am, but did not notice any FBI or OPA agents there. A Vestcor resident and a maintenance personnel said they did not notice any

LB employees given 14-hour notice on 64-hour schedule

The Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature's Leg-

islative Bureau sent Friday a notice to all Legislative Bureau

employees about the implementation of the 64-hour work

schedule effective March 15. Legislative Bureau director

CUC awarded \$1.7M to build water filtration system

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross announced Friday that the Department's Economic Development Administration is awarding a \$1.7 million grant to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. on Saipan to assist with the construction of a new water filtration system. The EDA grant, to be located in a Tax Cuts and Jobs Act Opportunity Zone, will be matched with \$431,604 in local funds and is expected to help create 370 jobs and generate \$110 million in private investment.

"The Trump administration is committed to helping U.S. territories recover and rebuild after natural disasters," said Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross. "These critical infrastructure improvements will support Saipan's efforts in creating new jobs and spurring economic growth."

"The construction of the new filtration system will ensure the availability of fresh potable water on the island, supporting the capacity of local businesses after the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu," said U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Dr. John Fleming. "The project's loca-

tion in an Opportunity Zone will help make more employment opportunities and higher wages available to the region's workforce."

"I want to thank the Trump administration for their steadfast commitment to the Marianas, as we continue our recovery from Super Typhoon Yutu," said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. "This EDA grant assists us in fulfilling our priority to provide 24-hour fresh potable water for residents on Saipan, while also creating new job opportunities for U.S. workers through the President's Opportunity Zone initiative. The CNMI has benefited greatly from the President's initiative, and we continue to promote our Opportunity Zones to businesses from the U.S. mainland. Our strong partnership with EDA has led to grants that will rebuild Northern Marianas College, our public schools, and community facilities, and I want to thank the EDA leadership, Mario Iglesias, and our grants team for their collaborative work on building a stronger Marianas."

"This should be the first of many recovery grants to the Marianas from the funding we provided in the Disaster Relief Act, Public Law 116-

20," said Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP). "The Marianas economy is still struggling after Super Typhoon Yutu—and now the loss of tourism from coronavirus. So EDA grants with their emphasis on job creation and economic development are particularly important to our recovery. I also look forward to additional grants from EDA to help rebuild our schools, which are our very best tool for economic growth."

This project is funded by the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019, or Public Law 116-20, which provided EDA with \$600 million in additional Economic Adjustment Assistance Program funds for disaster relief and recovery for areas affected by Hurricanes Florence, Michael, and Lane, Typhoons Yutu and Mangkhut, wildfires, volcanic eruptions, and other major natural disasters occurring in calendar year 2018, and tornadoes and floods occurring in calendar year 2019, under the Robert T. Stafford Act.

The funding announced Friday goes to one of Northern Mariana Island's 20 Opportunity Zones. Created by President Donald J. Trump's Tax

Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, Opportunity Zones are spurring economic development in economically-distressed communities nationwide. In June 2019, EDA added Opportunity Zones as an Investment Priority, which increases the number of catalytic Opportunity Zone-related projects that EDA can fund to fuel greater public investment in these areas. To learn more about the Commerce Department's work in Opportunity Zones, visit EDA's Opportunity Zones webpage. To learn more about the Opportunity Zone program, see the Treasury Department resources page.

About

The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting competitiveness and preparing the nation's regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. An agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA makes investments in economically distressed communities in order to create jobs for U.S. workers, promote American innovation, and accelerate long-term sustainable economic growth. (PR)

Antonio P. Sablan informed all LB employees that his letter shall serve as the 14 days' notice of a work hour reduction of 16 hours per pay period—from 80 hours to 64 hours—and shall be applied every Friday.

Sablan said the duration of this reduction will be subject to availability of funds and shall be effective on March 15 and last until Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres lifts the austerity measures.

The director said that, based on Torres' communication dated Feb. 7, the governor cited the projections made by Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig in indicating his intention to make across-the-board cuts to the fiscal Year 2020 budget resources of the CNMI government, including the Legislative Bureau in the amount of 28.3%.

Saipan Tribune learned that there are about 26 to 27 employees at the Legislative

Bureau that will be affected by the 16-hour cut.

Atalig had informed Torres that the increased number of cancellations in flights from China has prompted them to revise the annual revenue estimates for the fiscal year, from an initial projected decrease in gross revenues of \$39.20 million to \$48.38 million.

Atalig disclosed that gross revenue estimates for the current fiscal year are now expected at \$184,834,810, which is a decrease of \$48,387,717 from \$233,222,527 that is appropriated under Public Law 21-08. (*Ferdie De La Torre*)

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RESERVE YOUR SPOT NOW!

US, Japan, Australian forces kick off Cope North 2020

By STAFF SGT. GREGORY NASH,
PACIFIC AIR FORCES PUBLIC AFFAIRS

More than 100 aircraft will soar over the CNMI and the Federated States of Micronesia as U.S. forces, Koku Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force) and the Royal Australian air force collaborates during exercise Cope North 2020, which is ongoing from Feb. 12 to Feb. 28.

Approximately 2,000 military personnel will hone their skills to increase combat readiness and interoperability during the annual trilateral field



U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN GRACIE LEE
Members of the U.S. military, Royal Australian air force, and Japan Air Self-Defense Force stand in formation to start Exercise Cope North 20 at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Feb. 12, 2020.



U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN GRACIE LEE
A U.S. Navy EA-18G Growler, assigned to the Electronic Attack Squadron 138, breaks away from a U.S. Air Force KC-135 Stratotanker after being refueled during Exercise Cope North 20 at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Feb. 13, 2020.

GENERAL NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF ROTA EB-5 REGIONAL CENTER, LLC.

To Creditors and Claimants

Please be advised that the Rota EB-5 Regional Center, LLC has been dissolved by unanimous written consent of its shareholder, SNM Corporation, as of January 21, 2020.

All debts owed to the Rota EB-5 Regional Center, LLC and all claims against the limited liability company will be received by hand delivery or mail to Attorney Robert T. Torres, P.O. Box 503758 CK, Whispering Palms, Chalan Kiya, Saipan, MP 96950. All claims must be made in writing and include the claim amount, basis and origination date. All claims against Rota EB-5 Regional Center, LLC will be barred unless a proceeding to enforce the claim is commenced within five years after the publication of this notice.

Dated this 12th day of February, 2020.

SNM Corporation
Sole Member of Rota EB-5 Regional Center, LLC

/s/
Hee K. Cho
President and Authorized Representative
SNM Corporation

training exercise. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercises and strike mission training will be conducted during the first week, while air combat tactics and a large-force employment training takes place the second week.

"This exercise is a model opportunity for our countries to participate in world-class training and expand engagements to strengthen our interoperability," said U.S. Air Force Col. Scott Rowe, Cope North exercise director. "It validates new ways to deploy and maneuver people and assets, which ultimately enhances our capacity and capability to foster a free and open Indo-Pacific."

Teams will face various challenges during the 17-day event by focusing on integrating and refining best practices for coordinating combined air tactics, techniques and procedures.

Part of the HADR training scenario is a medical evacuation from Rota to Guam featuring aeromedical evacuation doctors and crews. All three nations will work together



U.S. AIR FORCE/SENIOR AIRMAN GRACIE LEE
A U.S. Navy EA-18G Growler, assigned to the Electronic Attack Squadron 138, prepares to be refueled from a U.S. Air Force KC-135 Stratotanker during Exercise Cope North 20 at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Feb. 13, 2020.

during the crisis response scenario to provide airborne command and control, combat jumps, joint terminal attack controllers, and bilateral training with the military working dogs and security forces.

"Training programs such as exercise Cope North provides invaluable opportunities to test operational air and ground crews to the highest level," said RAAF Group Capt. Mark Larter, Multinational

Task Force commander. "For the first time, U.S. Pacific Air Forces has invited the Royal Australian Air Force to lead the HADR mission to demonstrate combat readiness, humanitarian assistance procedures and interoperability between the forces of the United States, Australia and Japan."

Cope North—originally a quarterly exercise between the U.S. and Japanese air forces in Misawa, Japan—was moved to Guam in 1999. RAAF joined in 2011 to strengthen the trilateral relationships and further integrate HADR operations and a large-force employment exercise. The now-annual exercise is designed to promote stability and security throughout the Indo-Pacific and continues to evolve throughout the years.

"I had participated in Cope North as a young pilot about 17 years ago," said Koku Jieitai Col. Katsushi "Kitty" Hashimoto. "I am pleasantly surprised to see how much this exercise has evolved over time. It literally shows the evolution of our already strong relationship among U.S., Australia and Japan."

This year marks the first time the Japan Maritime Defense Force is bringing a US-2 ShinMaywa amphibious aircraft to incorporate personnel recover missions.

"I am very confident this exercise will further enhance our combat capability and strengthen our alliance more than ever before," Hashimoto said.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT NO. 20-01 United States District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands

Information Technology Security Officer

Permanent, Full-Time Position - Location: SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS (CNMI)
Starting grade: CL-27 Step 1 \$57,670, to CL-28 Step 25 \$86,403, depending on qualifications.
(Advanced starting grade above CL-28 Step 25 may be available with exceptional qualifications.)
Opening Date: February 3, 2020 • Applications received by February 21, 2020 will be given priority.

Position Overview:

The Information Technology Security Officer (ITSO) develops Information Technology security policy to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of systems, networks, and data; protected from unauthorized intrusion. The ITSO is responsible for implementing local policies that comply with national IT security standards. At the advanced (CL-28) level the ITSO develops high-level documentation and presentations of security policy, and serves as a team lead to fulfill security objectives. This position reports to the Information Services Manager. Complete position description is available upon request, or via Internet at <http://www.nmid.uscourts.gov>. This position includes full federal employment benefits, with paid leave and holidays, health insurance, life insurance and federal retirement benefits.

Minimum Qualifications and Preferred Qualifications:

High School graduate with two years of specialized experience in a field closely related to these duties, or a bachelor's degree with honors or distinction, or completion of one or more years graduate study in a field closely related to the subject matter of this position; and holder of CompTIA "A+" or equivalent certification. Additional preference will be given for college graduation, advanced work experience directly in this field, and for holders of CompTIA "Networks+", "Security+", "CASP+" or equivalent certifications in the fields of network management and IT security. Applicants should demonstrate sound ethics and judgment, and have superior communication skills.

Citizenship Requirement:

Applicants are required to be U.S. citizens or aliens who are authorized to work in the U.S.

Notice to Applicants:

Excepted service appointments are "at will" and may be terminated by either the court or the employee at any time for any reason. Selectees are subject to a background investigation and suitability determination, and updated background investigations every five years. Employees are subject to the Judicial Code of Conduct. Direct deposit of pay is required.

Application Procedure:

Each applicant is required to submit a Cover Letter, Resume, and an AO-78 application form. AO-78 forms are on the Internet at: <http://www.nmid.uscourts.gov> or may be picked up at the U.S. District Court. Position is open until filled; applications received by February 21, 2020 will be given priority.

Deliver signed applications to:

Clerk of Court
United States District Court
for the Northern Mariana Islands
2nd Floor Horiguchi Bldg, Garapan, Saipan

Or, email signed applications to:
HR@nmid.uscourts.gov

The United States District Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 01-2020

Opening date: February 12, 2020

Closing date: March 04, 2020

Positions:

- (1) Electrician (Saipan)
- (1) ARFF General Maintenance-I (Saipan)
- (1) Receptionist/Secretary (Saipan)
- (1) HR Specialist (Saipan)
- (1) Radio Operator/Weather Observer (Tinian)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the **CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office Tinian International Airport**. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Wednesday, March 04, 2020**.

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

EPA awards NMI \$7.2M for Infrastructure to protect CNMI waters

HONOLULU—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Friday the availability of \$2.7 billion for State Revolving Funds, including \$7.2 million for the Northern Mariana Islands. This funding assists states, tribes, and territories with infrastructure projects that help protect surface water and provide safe drinking water to communities across the United States.

"EPA's decades-long commitment to water infrastructure has helped provide \$180 billion in project financing to over 41,000 water qual-

Teen poetry slam competition invites youth

The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence will be hosting Teen Poetry Slam 2020 on Feb. 28, starting at 6pm, at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

This event is intended to raise awareness during Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in February 2020 and is open to ages 13 to 19. To participate, sign up by Feb. 19, 2020.

Those ages 13-19 are invited to perform their original poetry about teen dating violence and/or healthy relationships at NMCADSV's Teen Poetry Slam competition. Those interested in competing must submit their poems and contact information for review to info@EndViolenceNMI.org before or by 11:59pm on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020.

Poem submissions must include the contestant's full name, age, name of school, and contact number(s). Submissions may be sent within the body of the email, as a

Word document, or as a PDF to info@EndViolenceNMI.org

Poems and performances will be judges on the following criteria: quality of writing; entertainment value of the poem; connection to the audience; and relevance to Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Note that poems must not contain real name or profanity, and performances should not be longer than five minutes. Contestants will also be performing one poem in either the 13-15-year-old division, or the 16-19-year-old division. To be eligible for awards, contestants must present their own poem as originally submitted, with no changes or additions to the written content.

For more information, contact the Northern Marianas Coalition against Domestic & Sexual Violence at (670) 234-3878 or email info@EndViolenceNMI.org. (PR)

ity infrastructure projects and 15,000 drinking water projects across the country," said EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler. "In the past three years, the Trump administration has accelerated EPA's investment in infrastructure projects that modernize our nation's water infrastructure and improve public health and the environment."

In 2020, EPA is providing approximately \$1.6 billion in new federal grant funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, including \$3,944,000 to assist the Northern Mariana Islands. This funding is available for a wide range of water infrastructure projects, including modernizing aging wastewater infrastructure, implementing water reuse

and recycling and addressing stormwater. More than \$64 million in CWSRF grant funding is available to tribes, certain U.S. territories and the District of Columbia for infrastructure projects.

EPA is also making available more than \$1.07 billion in new federal grant funding for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, including \$3,247,000 to assist the Northern Mariana Islands. This funding can be used for loans that help drinking water systems install treatment for contami-

nants, improve distribution systems by removing lead service lines and improve system resiliency to natural disasters such as floods. In addition, more than \$50 million in DWSRF grant funding is available to tribes, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia to use for drinking water system upgrades.

Under the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs, EPA provides funding to all 50 states and Puerto Rico to capitalize SRF loan programs. The states and Puerto

Rico contribute an additional 20 percent to match the federal grants. The 51 SRF programs function like infrastructure banks by providing low-interest loans to eligible recipients for drinking water and clean water infrastructure projects. As the loan principal and interest are repaid over time, it allows the state's DWSRF and CWSRF to be recycled or "revolve." As money is returned to the state's revolving loan fund, the state makes new loans to other eligible recipients.. (PR)

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Li Chen

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Li Chen is proposing to occupy a structure to operate a Bed & Breakfast establishment. This use is classified as "Bed & Breakfast" and is permitted in the district as Conditional Use. This project is located on Lot No 017 D 08 in China Town. This area is zoned as Village Residential.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date : February 25, 2020
Time : 5:00 pm
Place : Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center Building Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, February 24, 2020. Please send written comments via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Mariano Taitano, Chairman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

for
Success International Corporation dba
New Hope Rock Quarry

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Success International Corporation dba New Hope Rock Quarry is proposing to operate an Industrial Use (Mining). This use is classified as "Industrial" and is permitted in the district as a Conditional Use. This project is located on Lot No. 011 C 04 in As Matuis village. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.

Date: February 25, 2020
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center Building Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, February 24, 2020. Please send written comments via e-mail to yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Mariano Taitano, Chairman

AMENDMENT Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

5:00 PM, Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center Building
Tel: 234-9661/2 • Fax: 234-9666 • www.zoning.gov.mp

- A. Preliminary Matters
 - 1. Call to Order
 - 2. Roll Call
 - 3. Adoption of Agenda
 - 4. Adoption of 1/23/2020 meeting minutes
 - 5. Public Comments (not related to files for discussion under item B. Public Hearings)
- B. Public Hearings:
 - 1. **Conditional Use Application #2019-4562:** Success International Corporation dba New Hope Rock Quarry is proposing to occupy a lot to operate its Mining use. This use is classified as "Mining" and is permitted in the district as a Conditional Use. This project is located on Lot No. 011 C 04 in As Matuis village. This area is zoned as Industrial.
 - 2. **Conditional Use Application #2019-4307:** Li Chen is proposing to occupy a structure to operate a Bed & Breakfast establishment. This use is classified as "Bed & Breakfast" and is permitted in the district as Conditional Use. This project is located on Lot No 017 D 08 in China Town. This area is zoned as Village Residential.
- C. Communication
 - 1. Office of the Public Auditor
 - 2. Saipan Northern Islands Legislative Delegation ("SNILD")
Proposed Saipan Zoning Law of 2019
 - 3. Re-appointment and request for nominees
- D. Old Business
 - 1. Job Vacancy Announcement for Zoning Administrator position
 - 2. Nuisance Abatement & Blighted Properties Maintenance Act of 2018 regulation
- E. Executive (Closed) Session
- F. New Business
 - 1. Operations Reports (Permitting & Enforcement)
 - 2. FY 2021 Budget and Annual Report
 - 3. ITB 19-ZB-134 "Vehicle purchase for Enforcement & Operations"
 - 4. Board decision/Action to hire the Zoning Administrator applicant
- G. Miscellaneous
 - 1. Other Matters
 - 2. Announcements
 - a. Directive No. 2020-002 "Implementation of 64-hour work schedule and cost containment measures"
 - 3. Next Meeting
- H. Adjournment

Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting Agenda

Monday, February 24, 2020

10:00 AM, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan
Tel: 234-9661/2 • Fax: 234-9666 • www.zoning.gov.mp

A. Preliminary Matters

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Roll Call
- 3. Adoption of Agenda

B. Special Meeting Topic:

- 1. Hiring of Zoning Administrator

C. Executive (Closed) Session

- 1. Interview of the Zoning Administrator applicant
- 2. Review of Applicant Qualifications

D. Miscellaneous

E. Adjournment



**COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Regular General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, February 19, 2020
9:00am-11:00am
NMC Board of Regents Conference Room

AGENDA

I. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum
II. Review and Adoption of Agenda
III. Review and Adoption of Minutes

- a. December 11, 2019 meeting
- b. January 02, 2020 Meeting

IV. Public Comments (5 Minutes per Commenter)

V. Old Business

- a. 2020-2023 WIOA Unified State Plan
- i. Official Submission Date

VI. New Business

- a. Committee Reports
 - i. Executive Committee
 - ii. Policies and Procedures Committee
 - 1. Eligible Training Provider
 - iii. Planning, Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Committee
 - 1. State Plan
 - a. Public Comments
 - 2. Finalization and Submission of Revised State Plan
 - iv. Program Committee

VII. Executive Session

VIII. Announcements

IX. Next Meeting

- a. Wednesday, April 01, 2020

X. Adjournment

Approved by:
/s/
Josephine DLG. Mesta
Chair

Sumo Wrestling Exhibition

Photos by BEA CABRERA



Best rank *maegashira* Kyokutaisei Takuya and Kyokushiuho Koki show the proper sumo stance before a fight at the sumo wrestling exhibition held Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.



Best rank *maegashira* Kyokutaisei Takuya and Kyokushiuho Koki perform an exhibition bout for excited spectators at the sumo wrestling exhibition last Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan, which has been transformed into a makeshift *dohyu*, the ring in which sumo wrestling bouts are held.



Best rank *maegashira* Kyokutaisei Takuya and Kyokushiuho Koki perform in an exhibition bout at the sumo wrestling exhibition last Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.



Best rank *maegashira* Kyokutaisei Takuya and Kyokushiuho Koki perform a fight exhibition for excited spectators at the sumo wrestling exhibition last Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.



The management and officers of Hyatt Regency Saipan led by general manager Nick Ishikawa, center, attend the sumo wrestling exhibition last Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.



Sous chef Zen Tomokane stirs a big pot of sumo stew or Chankonabe, a traditional sumo wrestler meal, before serving guests at the sumo wrestling exhibition held Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.



Families and guests were treated to a delicious meal of sumo stew and *onigiri* at the sumo wrestling exhibition held Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.



Sumo wrestler Kyokushiuho Koki and a student-volunteer face off at the sumo wrestling exhibition held Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.



Families and guests were treated to a sumo stew and *onigiri* at the sumo wrestling exhibition held Saturday at the beach side of Hyatt Regency Saipan.



CNMI children surround two professional sumo wrestlers from Tokyo at the sumo wrestling exhibition event at the beach side of the Hyatt Regency Saipan held Saturday.

Invasive bug is found feeding on avocado plants in Hawaii

HONOLULU (AP)—An invasive bug was discovered feeding on avocado leaves across the state of Hawaii and was most recently found on Maui plants in retail outlets, entomologists said.

The avocado lace bug was first discovered in Pearl City, Oahu, in December and was subsequently identified on Hawaii Island and Maui, the state Department of Agriculture said. Department officials have not confirmed the presence of the bug on Kauai.

The lace bug feeds on the leaves of avocado plants ex-

tracting nutrients and gradually destroying the plants, experts said. The bug does not

feed on the fruit itself. The bug causes green to yellowish blotches on the

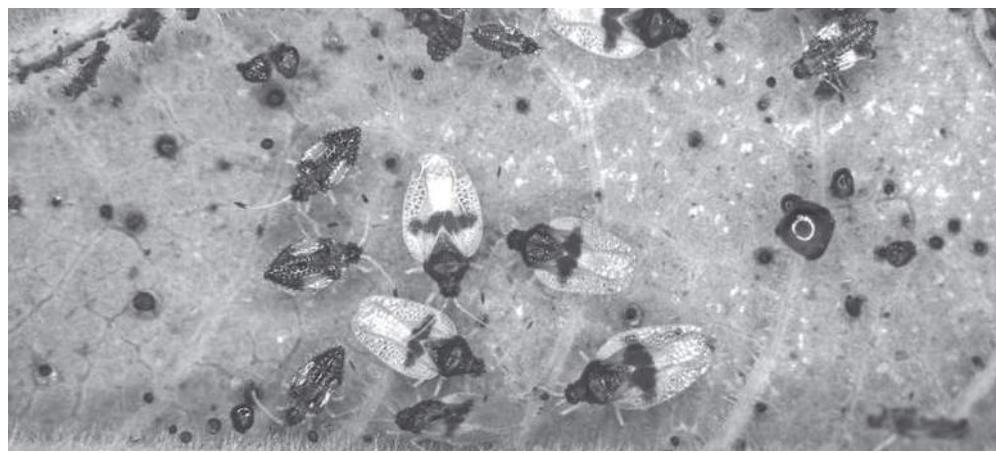
leaves and damaged leaves become dry, may curl, drop prematurely and may cause

reduction in fruit yields.

The lace bug, scientifically known as *pseudacysta perseae*, is also known to feed on red bay plants and camphor trees on the Mainland. The bug can also be found in the Caribbean, Central and South America and Portugal.

Adult avocado lace bugs have black heads and mostly black bodies with a black stripe across the width of their lacy wings, and immature bugs can range in color from red to dark brown to black.

Possible infestations should be reported to Agriculture Department's Plant Pest Control Branch.



In this undated photo released by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture shows adults and nymphs of the Avocado Lace Bug, (*Pseudacysta perseae*). AP

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)
NMHC IFB 2020-007

BID SUBMISSION DATE: March 06, 2020 **TIME:** 10:30 AM

Website Design for the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program

Project package will be available on February 14, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. The bid package can also be obtained online at www.nmhcgov.net titled Public Notice/Announcements

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAIC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A **Mandatory Pre-Bid conference** will be held at 10:00 a.m. on February 21, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office Conference Room located in Garapan. Failure to attend the Mandatory pre-bid conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/9447 or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Vinney Atalig-Hocog
Chairman,
NMHC Board of Directors /s/ Francisco C. Aguon
Acting Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhcgov.net>

INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: Friday, February 28, 2020
TIME: 11:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2020-002

Purchase of Equipment for Fire Truck

Project package will be available on February 03, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAIC 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A **Mandatory Pre-Bid conference** will be held at 10:00 a.m. on February 12, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office Conference Room located in Garapan. Failure to attend the Mandatory pre-bid conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670) 234-6866/9447 or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Vinney Atalig-Hocog
Chairman
NMHC Board of Directors /s/ Francisco C. Aguon
Acting Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhcgov.net>

INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: March 10, 2020
TIME: 10:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2020-004

Rehabilitation and Expansion of the Tanapag Youth Center Building

Project package will be available on February 03, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of fifty dollars (\$50.00) is required for the project package. Payment must be by cash, credit card, cashier's check or certified check made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented in order to obtain the project package.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAIC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A **Mandatory Pre-Bid conference** will be held at 10:00 a.m. on February 20, 2020, at NMHC Conference Room located in Garapan. Failure to attend the Mandatory pre-bid conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/9447; or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Vinney Atalig-Hocog
Chairman
NMHC Board of Directors /s/ Francisco C. Aguon
Acting Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

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Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhcgov.net>

INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: March 05, 2020
TIME: 10:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2020-005

Building Maintenance of NMHC's Housing Units in Tinian (20 units)

Proposal packets will be available on February 03, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan or the Tinian Field Office in San Jose, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAIC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A **Mandatory Pre-Bid conference** will be held at 10:00 a.m. on February 18, 2020, at the NMHC Tinian Field Office, San Jose, Tinian.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/9447 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Vinney Atalig-Hocog
Chairman
NMHC Board of Directors /s/ Francisco C. Aguon
Acting-Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhcgov.net>

INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: March 05, 2020
TIME: 10:30 AM

NMHC IFB 2020-006

Ground Maintenance Services for NMHC's Properties in Tinian

Proposal packets will be available on February 03, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan or the Tinian Field Office in San Jose, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAIC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A **Mandatory Pre-Bid conference** will be held at 2:00 p.m. on February 18, 2020, at the NMHC Tinian Field Office, San Jose, Tinian.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/9447 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Vinney Atalig-Hocog
Chairman
NMHC Board of Directors /s/ Francisco C. Aguon
Acting-Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Board Meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, February 20, 2020 – 5:00 p.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Saipan**. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Adoption of Minutes
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
 - a. Divisional Update Reports
- IV. OLD BUSINESS**
 - a. CDBG-DR Updates
 - b. Personnel Policies and Procedures Updates
 - c. Procurement Policies and Procedures Updates
- V. NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. FY 2021 Budget
- VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT**
- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**
- VIII. OTHER MATTERS**
- IX. ADJOURNMENT**

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ VINNEY ATALIG HOCOG
Chairman of the Board

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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AP The Associated Press

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EDITORIAL

A free society cannot function without a vibrant professional press

A free society cannot function without vibrant professional newspapers. In light of that truism, the latest dire news for the news business—that McClatchy newspapers, publisher of The Kansas City Star and almost 30 other newspapers in 14 states across America, is filing for bankruptcy—should worry every American who cares about our democracy. In this era of politicians who too often see accurate information as the enemy, real journalism needs all the public support it can get.

The good news is that McClatchy, a 163-year-old family-owned company that also publishes The Miami Herald, The Sacramento Bee and a host of other legacy newspapers, says the bankruptcy won't immediately affect its newsrooms. The bad news is, recent history indicates that will be a difficult promise to keep.

The chain's bankruptcy plan would give it breathing room from \$700 million in debt to strengthen its digital business while operating under the control of its longtime creditor, hedge fund Chatham Asset Management. Hedge fund control of newspapers is a concerning trend, given the funds' penchant for slashing labor-intensive journalism operations to goose short-term profits. Meanwhile, the consolidation of thousands of previously separate, often family-owned newspapers under a relative handful of corporate owners raises dire questions about journalistic independence.

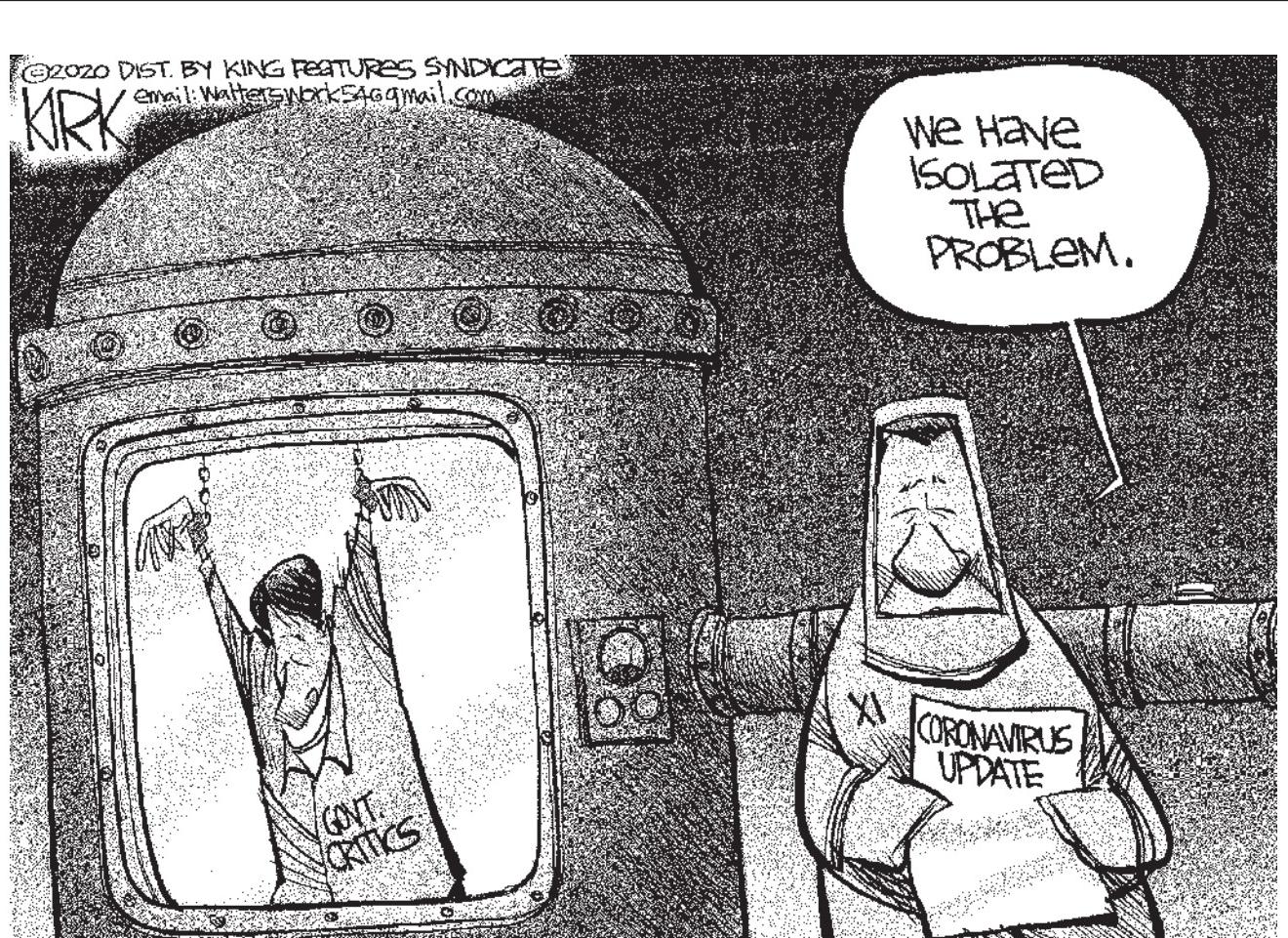
At the root of the problem lies the internet, which has flooded society with so much free information that getting people to pay for it via newspaper subscriptions is an increasingly difficult pitch. There's a huge difference between serious professional journalism offered by newspapers and the unreliable or irrelevant (or worse) noise that fills so much of cyberspace under the "news" label. An information-inundated public doesn't always see the difference.

A president who routinely denigrates real journalism while promoting internet lies doesn't help, but this crisis long predates Donald Trump. According to a report last year by PEN America, weekday U.S. newspaper circulation since 2008 has fallen by about 36%. Think about that: How many industries could absorb the loss of more than a third of their core business in a little over a decade?

"One problem with losing local coverage is that we never know what we don't know," notes Washington Post media columnist Margaret Sullivan. "Corruption can flourish, taxes can rise, public officials can indulge their worst impulses." We're seeing those worst impulses today from Washington to Jefferson City—but we're only seeing them because of professional journalism.

We wish the best for our competitor-colleagues at McClatchy and we encourage their readers to keep reading—and subscribing. McClatchy's problems, and those of the entire newspaper industry, are unlike other evolutionary market changes because of their unique threat to democracy. When the horse-drawn buggy gave way to the automobile, craftsmen lost their livelihoods and a way of life disappeared, but it didn't endanger the healthy functioning of our republic. This does.

(c)2020 St. Louis Post-Dispatch



America, if you are listening — let's fix our elections

Today we're going to propose a new, commonsense way to fix our elections.

In case you haven't noticed, the breaking news about our system for choosing presidential nominees is that our system is way beyond broken. It is also senseless to the point of being borderline bizarre. And the way it begins is just about as undemocratic as anything any democracy has ever willfully inflicted upon itself.

For decades, Americans have increasingly been shamefully outsourcing the early winnowing of our presidential candidates to two small states that have only minuscule black and Hispanic populations – the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primary. Candidates spend a year on door-to-door, diner-to-barbershop retail politicking before voters who are overwhelmingly white and represent just 65 of the 3,979 pledged Democratic convention delegates. This campaign's field that once was more than 20 candidates is now just seven, as the campaign finally has moved on to states with larger minority populations – Nevada's Feb. 22 caucuses and South Carolina's Feb. 29 primary.

Then suddenly, candidates and strategists will be plunged into a politically nightmarish three-day campaign hell – the March 3 Super Tuesday. Presidential wannabes will be pinballing back and forth across the continent on an impossible quest to campaign in 14 states in just 72 hours (with a whopping 1,357 delegates at stake), from California to Massachusetts, Oklahoma to Virginia, and so on. It makes no sense.

Meanwhile, we also have other ways to measure how the 2020 campaign is going so far. We can use two yardsticks: diversity and democracy.

Diversity: Iowa and New Hampshire have only minuscule percentages of black and Hispanic populations – and by the time those two states got around to their final debates, the Democratic Party, which proudly boasts it is America's party of diversity, had no blacks on stage. The two prominent black senators who had been running for president, Kamala Harris of California and Cory Booker of New Jersey, had dropped out due to a lack of early support, especially in Iowa and New Hampshire.

Democracy: Iowa's caucuses (and those in all caucus states) are showcases of the sort of democratic principles that must be greatly admired by Moscow's Vladimir Putin and Beijing's Xi Jinping. For starters, there are no secret ballots in caucus states. Voters cluster in groups according to the candidate they favor.

That means every voter's neighbors can see their voting choices – and so can their workplace bosses and union reps. Strong-willed voters openly urge (see also: arm-twist) people to switch to their candidate's clusters. (For the moment, we won't discuss the way the Iowa Democratic Party screwed up its caucuses, be-

By MARTIN SCHRAM

Tribune News Service

Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive. Readers may send him email at martin.schram@gmail.com.



cause our point here is that even if it works, it's fatally flawed.)

Bottom line: Americans have, in effect, outsourced to those two small, unrepresentative states the task of winnowing the field before any of the rest of us get to vote.

For decades, many critics have urged a switch to four regional primaries: Northeast, South, Midwest and West, on the first Tuesday of March, April, May and June. But that reform risks creating a new problem: It could leave us with four regional candidates and no consensus.

So, to avoid the risk caused by potential regional biases, I have proposed a significant variation that cuts across the traditional regions:

Regroup our 50 states into three Time-Zone Primaries:

■ The Eastern Zone includes Georgia, Pennsylvania, New York and New Hampshire all voting on the same day.

■ The Central Zone includes Michigan, Iowa, Arkansas and Texas.

■ The Western/Rocky Mountain Zone: Oregon, Colorado, California, and Arizona. Campaigning within the same time zone avoids the need for those coast-to-coast pinballing. The order of each zone's primary elections would be drawn from a hat.

But in past years, critics raised a valid concern: We will lose something valuable if we don't start with one or a few small states, because they enable candidates with little name recognition and financing to spend their one resource – time – doing retail door-to-door politicking. It's their one chance to become known. Indeed, it worked for Jimmy Carter in 1976.

So today we are offering a new and improved Time Zone Primaries proposal: In each zone, party officials will select one small or middle-sized state that also has a representatively diverse population; it will vote on the second Tuesday of that zone's election month. The rest of the time zone then votes on the month's fourth Tuesday.

This modified Time Zone Primaries plan can preserve the rainbow diversity that makes America the envy of the world. And it can finally gift most of us with something we really have never had – a real role in choosing our presidents.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

China's secrecy has made the coronavirus crisis much worse

For eight years, China's President Xi Jinping has trumpeted his country's increasingly authoritarian system as a grand model for other developing countries to follow. No doubt, China has seen an extraordinary period of economic growth, which has benefited hundreds of millions in China and around the world. But authoritarianism has also come at great costs, as the rapid spread of the novel coronavirus underscores.

In two months, the virus has spread throughout China and beyond. More than 60,000 people have been reported infected, and nearly 1,400 have died as a consequence of the disease. These numbers are likely to vastly underestimate the true extent of its spread and impact. The numbers inside China are bound to be much higher, and the lack of reports from Africa, the Middle East and South America are more likely due to faltering health care systems rather than its absence altogether.

We may never know if the spread of the new virus could have been prevented by earlier, concerted action. But the fact that China chose secrecy and inaction turned the possibility of an epidemic into a reality.

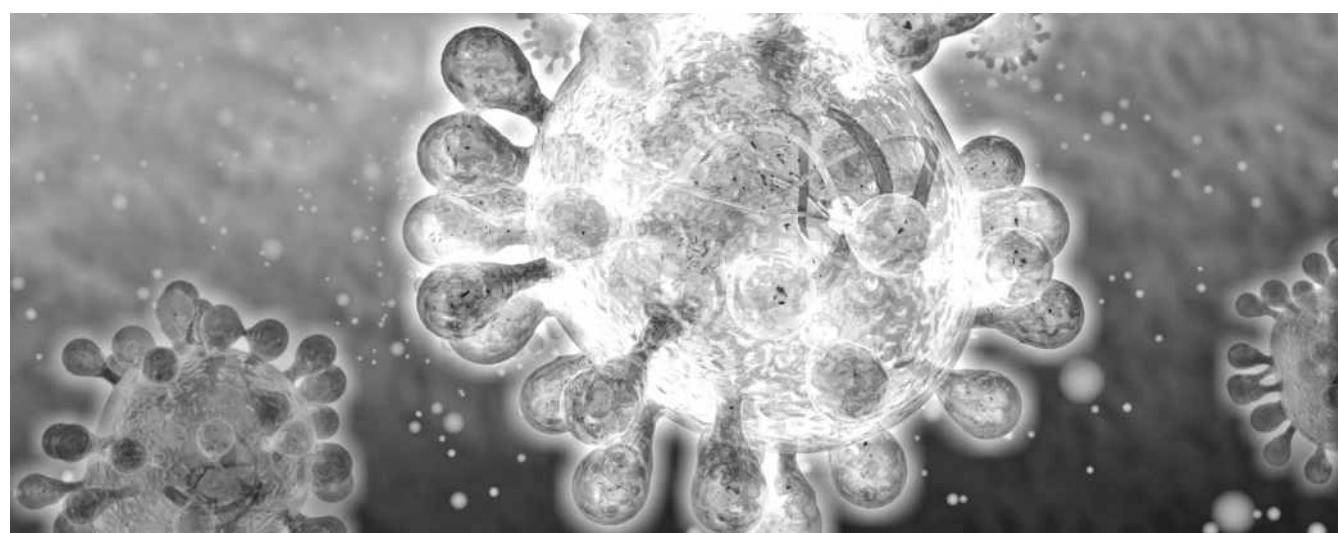
The first instance of a new pneumonialike disease in Wuhan, an industrial city of 11 million people, emerged in early December. By the end of the month, doctors in Wuhan noticed an increased number of sick people with symptoms similar to the SARS outbreak that had killed nearly 800 people in 2002-03.

The patients were quarantined, and the Wuhan health commission issued a public notice stressing no cause for alarm. The infections were traced to a live-animal food market, which was shut down on Jan. 1, and the genetic sequence of a new coronavirus was identified two days later.

Official communications stressed that there was no reason to believe the disease could be spread among humans, and the authorities cracked down hard on any medical warnings that appeared on social media. In one notable case, a WeChat post by Dr. Li Wenliang to colleagues that patients at his hospital had been quarantined with SARS-like symptoms, was dismissed as "illegal acts of fabricating, spreading rumors, and disrupting social order." (Dr. Li later contracted the disease and died.)

Chinese authorities waited for a month after the first case to notify the World Health Organization about the new coronavirus, thus delaying concerted efforts to understand the virus, its transmissibility and lethality among infectious disease specialists around the world. Even so, from Jan. 2 to Jan. 18, China did not report any new cases and continued to downplay its severity. As the number of hospitalizations mounted in Wuhan, officials went ahead with a New Year banquet for 40,000 people.

Only when new cases were reported outside Hubei province on Jan. 20 did the Chinese authorities decide to act. Within days, Hubei province, home to 50 million people, was quarantined, with no travel allowed.



Artist's image of a coronavirus cell.

By IVO DAALDER
Chicago Tribune

Ivo Daalder is president of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and a former U.S. ambassador to NATO.



But it was too late. The disease had spread around the country and the world. Within Wuhan, reports of new cases and deaths grew exponentially—from just a hundred infected patients and deaths in single digits in mid-January, to tens of thousands of reported cases and hundreds of death a few weeks later. Yet, even though Chinese authorities finally acknowledged the severity of the situation, Beijing did not allow a WHO investigating team to enter China until this week and still declines offers by the United States and other countries to send all the experts needed to help combat the disease.

Authoritarian political systems don't do well when confronting unexpected crises, especially those like infectious diseases that require a rapid local response. They disempower officials at the lower rungs. The firmer the control at the top, the less likely the initiative from the bottom. Dangers go unreported and those who speak out, like Dr. Li, are quickly punished as a clear sign to others to stay in line.

But when it comes to infectious diseases, top-down approaches fail. In fact, they make things worse, by delaying actions that could otherwise prevent the spread of the disease. Only if people are empowered to take the initiative can quick action be taken.

When the first coronavirus patient in the United States presented himself in Snohomish County, Wash., Holianne Bruce didn't wait for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to confirm the disease. The epidemiologist assigned to the county immediately traced everyone the patient had been in contact with and urged them to remain in isolation for 14 days to prevent the disease from spreading. So far, it hasn't.

Authoritarians are good at ducking responsibility and shifting blame. And no doubt Xi Jinping will survive this latest crisis and remain fully in charge of the country. But people inside and out of China will have noticed that secrecy and control can be deadly, and will begin to question whether the system is in fact as effective as China's leaders make it out to be.

Show cats and dogs some love this month: Get them 'fixed'

Roses are red. Violets are blue. If you love animals, here's what you should do: Make a date with your veterinarian. No, not for dinner and a movie ... a date to have your animal companions "snipped."

February may be associated with romance, thanks to Valentine's Day, but it's also Spay/Neuter Awareness Month, and if you have an animal friend who still hasn't been "fixed," there's no better time to do it. Many veterinarians, spay/neuter clinics and animal shelters offer special deals on spaying and neutering in February, helping you save a little cash. But more importantly, having your animals fixed can save countless lives.

In many parts of the country, February is the last chance to "beat the heat" and get cats spayed before longer daylight hours shift their breeding cycles into overdrive. "Kitten season" begins in early spring and, for many shelters, brings a big influx of felines and a mad scramble to accommodate them all.

As cute as kittens may be, the consequences of their overpopulation are anything but. Many shelters have no choice but to make room by euthanizing older cats who've been there a while and are less likely to be adopted. Other facilities turn away newcomers—leaving them in the hands of people who can't or won't take care of them. Many end up on the street, forced to fend for themselves.

Sterilizing cats before kitten season strikes can prevent a catastrophe. And that goes for dogs, too. An "oops" litter of puppies can happen just as quickly as unplanned kittens can. And unless those pups are fixed, they can soon go on to have litters of their own, further worsening the problem.

Spaying and neutering aren't just vital to ending animal overpopulation and homelessness, though—they're also one of the best decisions you can make to protect your animal companions' health.

Spaying spares female animals the stress and discomfort of heat periods, greatly reduces their risk of mammary cancer and eliminates their risk of diseases of the ovaries and uterus—including cancer. Early "fixing" is a good thing: Females who are spayed before their first heat cycle not only avoid pregnancy but also have one-seventh the risk of developing mammary cancer.

Giving males the "snip" cuts their risk of prostate cancer and eliminates any chance of testicular cancer. It also helps keep the boys out of trouble: Neutered males have less of an urge to roam or fight. And altered animals are less likely to contract deadly, contagious diseases, such as feline AIDS and feline leukemia, which are spread through bodily fluids.

If your animal companions are already fixed, give yourself a pat on the back—and then get to work finding another animal who needs to be "snipped." Chances are, each of us knows

By LINDSAY POLLARD-POST
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

Lindsay Pollard-Post is a senior writer for the PETA Foundation, 501 Front St., Norfolk, VA 23510; www.PETA.org.



someone—perhaps a family member, neighbor or colleague—who just hasn't gotten around to making that appointment yet or who can't afford it.

We can make a world of difference by encouraging those people to have their animals sterilized, offering to drive their animals to and from their appointments or even paying for the surgery ourselves. It's money well spent: Spaying one female dog can prevent the births of 67,000 puppies over the course of six years, and fixing one female cat can prevent 370,000 kittens from being born in seven years.

A trip to the vet to have a cat or dog "snipped" may not be the most romantic thing you can do this month, but it's one of the best ways to show animals that you love them.

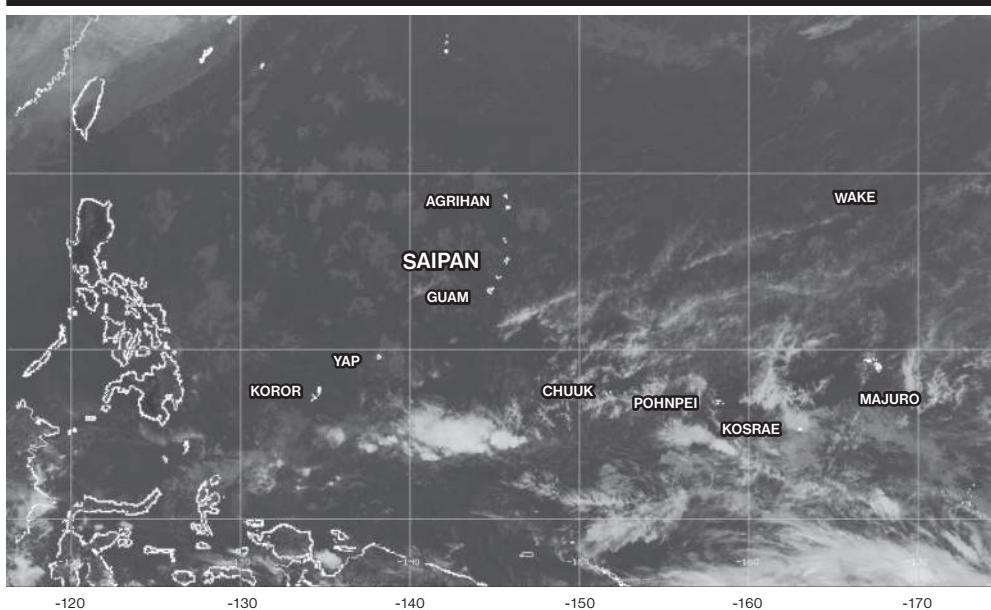
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
87°	74°	87°	74°	87°

75°	86°	74°	85°	74°
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YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:19 AM, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A fairly dry pattern remains in place over the Marianas this morning. Deep-layer moisture shows no indication of any big increase through the week, therefore maintained isolated showers through the week. Models continue to indicate another shear line approaching the islands, though a little later in the week. decided to maintain the previous forecast for now and will see how future model runs evolve with this scenario. Either way, moisture increase will be minimal, resulting in showers remaining isolated into next weekend.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲	▼	°F
Guam and Rota	Windy	83°	/	75°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84°	/	76°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86°	/	79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85°	/	80°
Pohnpei	Showers	85°	/	79°
Kosrae	Showers	85°	/	79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85°	/	80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲	▼	°F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73°	/	66°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	46°	/	21°
Hong Kong	Sunny	63°	/	55°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	81°	/	70°
London	Windy	52°	/	41°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	74°	/	51°
Manila	Showers	84°	/	73°
Melbourne	Showers	70°	/	57°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	79°	/	73°
New York	Mostly Sunny	52°	/	36°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	46°	/	37°
Paris	Showers	52°	/	41°
Busan	Sunny	46°	/	30°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	61°	/	48°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	69°	/	58°
San Francisco	Sunny	65°	/	46°
Seoul	Sunny	37°	/	21°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	54°	/	37°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	54°	/	40°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
■ Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
■ *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
■ Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
3:35 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.37
8:24 AM	LOW TIDE	1.01
1:53 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.67
9:40 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.11

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:41 AM	6:21 PM
Tuesday	6:40 AM	6:21 PM
Wednesday	6:40 AM	6:21 PM
Thursday	6:39 AM	6:22 PM
Friday	6:39 AM	6:22 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	1:13 AM	12:53 PM	-
Tuesday	2:10 AM	1:44 PM	-
Wednesday	3:06 AM	2:36 PM	-
Thursday	4:00 AM	3:30 PM	-
Friday	4:50 AM	4:23 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117 9:15am 9:55am Daily				UA174 7:30am 8:11am Daily			
UA156 6:20pm 7:00pm 2, 4, 6				UA112 4:45pm 5:26pm 2, 4, 6			
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816 4:35pm 7:30pm 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7				SKY811 10:15am 3:00pm Daily			
SKY816 5:05pm 8:00pm 6							
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451 3:20am 6:30am Daily				7C3452 9:35pm 2:30am+1 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7			
7C3452 10:05pm 2:30am+1 3							
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308 2:05am 6:05am Daily				OZ6233 7:30am 12:50pm 2, 4, 6			
OZ626 2:10am 6:05am 1				OZ623 8:10am 1:40pm 1, 3, 5, 7			
OZ626 2:50am 6:40am 2, 3, 5, 6, 7				7C3402 10:10am 3:30pm Daily			
OZ626 3:35am 7:20am 4				TW309 11:10am 4:40pm Daily			
7C3403 4:35am 8:35am Daily				OZ625 7:30pm 1:00am+1 7			
OZ6243 3:10pm 7:00pm 2, 4, 6				TW307 7:45pm 1:05am+1 Daily			
OZ624 3:30pm 7:20pm 1, 3, 5, 7				OZ625 8:20pm 1:40am+1 1, 2, 4, 5, 6			
7C3401 4:30pm 8:25pm Daily				OZ625 9:05pm 2:25am+1 3			
TW310 5:40pm 10:15pm Daily				7C3404 10:10pm 3:40am+1 Daily			
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701 2:10am 10:35am 1 via ICN				UA189/174 12:40am 8:11am+1 3, 6 via GUM			
OZ626/701 2:50am 10:35am 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN							

Business

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Roller skating, an activity usually associated with rolling down palm-lined boulevards in sunny Los Angeles, has arrived on Saipan. The islands' first roller skating arcade, located in San Antonio called International Roller Skates, officially opened last Saturday.

Special K-Pop performances from there groups from Korea added entertainment and spectacle to the grand opening.

According to IRS general manager Doyi Kim, it may seem simple enough as one will be rolling on quad skates on a smooth, hard, and durable floor but roller skating can also help you get fit. "This is a place where everybody can enjoy and get their fitness levels up. It is not only for children but for adults as well. ... This is Saipan's new spot for recreation and enjoyment,"

she said.

She assured that roller skating is not difficult. Even small children get into this sport, even children as young as 2 years old. If they can stand, walk, or run already, then they can try roller skating. "This is a great activity that the whole family can do, whether it is raining or hot outside as they are safe inside the four corners of the arcade," she added.

Until June 30, people can enjoy their opening promotion. Admission fee is only \$2 and roller skates, helmet, elbow and knee pads rental go for \$5 and locker rental go for \$1. "...the locker can be shared by a family or group of friends. ...The gear rental and roller skating session are good for two hours. ...We have a total of 5 roller skating sessions in a day..." Kim said.

She stressed that safety is a priority, hence there

'Let the good times roll'



BEA CABRERA

is a 30-minute break after every session, to inspect and clean the skating rink

The smooth, durable, and hard surface of the skating area can accommodate over 100 skaters at one time.

and surface because "every small speck or even a drop of water can be dangerous to our customers. ...We also have cameras around the arcade to ensure a quality [experience] and safety."

According to Kim, the arcade can accommodate more than 100 skaters at one time and beginners in roller skates need not be afraid to try. "Our staff have been trained by an experienced instructor from Korea. ...They will assist the customer in putting on roller skates and the safety gear and accompany them to the skating area. ...One of our future plans is to invite an instructor from Korea and hold 'Be-

ginner Classes' for a minimal fee for people who wants to learn or take this sport seriously," she said.

"We are also in talks with various schools about opening the arcade to them and add roller skating a part of their Physical Education class. ...We have a bus that can take children from their school to here and vice versa," she added.

Aside from roller skating, other games and activities are available like "Speedy Hockey," basketball shooting, darts, slides, and trampoline. "We have WiFi all over the place, a café. ...Currently, we are only serving water, soda and snacks but we are in the process of

developing our menu so we could have food offerings in the future," Kim said.

There is also a party room that can accommodate 30 people for private events like birthdays. There is also a plan to bring in hip hop classes in the future that will be taught by dancers and rappers from Korea.

International Roller Skates is a new business of P&A Corp. They are open Monday to Friday 12:30pm to 10pm and Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 10pm. For more information, call (670) 235-3313 or look them up on FaceBook or Instagram @internationalrollerskatingsaipan.



BEA CABRERA

International Roller Skates management and crew are ready to assist customers on opening day. From left: Evmar Banayoce, Cherish Balones, Doyi Kim, Steve Ha, and Marjony Camacho.

A budding cybersecurity industry in the CNMI

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Right now, the term "cybersecurity" sounds a lot like jargon—you hear about it often but don't really know what it's all about.

InteliSecure, a Colorado-based company and a provider of critical data security services, wants to change that, at least here in the CNMI, with this budding economic activity being touted as a possible answer to the call to diversify the island's economic base, in addition to tourism.

In December last year, InteliSecure came to the CNMI and, through vice president Graham Logsdon, announced its intention to open an office and access manpower in the CNMI.

"We are looking for talents in the CNMI to work as 'analysts' in the company



BEA CABRERA

InteliSecure is eyeing the CNMI to establish its third security operations aside from Denver and United Kingdom. From left, InteliSecure director of Client Strategy Michael Berruti, chief financial officer Gary Schlisner, vice president Graham Logsdon, and director for Security Operations Jose Padilla.

who will work in conjunction with our analysts in the [United Kingdom] and Denver. ...They will monitor our clients, make sure that they are safe from any activities that we feel are suspicious or dangerous and so we can

help them mitigate the risk of that," Logsdon said.

If you think your cybersecurity portfolio lacks enough shine, don't fret. Logsdon assured that the company is not looking for someone with the best and most impressive cy-

bersecurity résumé. "We hire people who are willing to learn, eager for knowledge, hardworking, and we want them to grow in the organization," he said.

Since then, the process has been moving along,

according to economic research and data analytics consultant Matthew Deleon Guerrero. "InteliSecure and Latte Training Academy are working together to put a security operations on track. ...With the two partnering up, the experience has been great, the process is smooth and it is something that we are grateful about," he said.

"We are moving along the process as we have a good set of the first cohort who are in the training process toward the first level of certification. The first batch has 10 participants and their development in training is looking really good," he added.

In a press statement from Latte Training Academy, they said that the CNMI's first cybersecurity firm is on target to launch in the second quarter of 2020 and that their partnership with InteliSecure will bring a new economic driver to the CNMI.

"...we are extremely excited with the progress that

InteliSecure is making toward launching the Marianas operations. The Latte Training Academy Inc. is currently running an Information Technology Fundamentals certification course and will be launching its second cohort in late February to fill the employment demand for InteliSecure," said LTA board member Ed Arriola Jr.

Deleon Guerrero said that the time has come for the tech industry to expand into the CNMI. "This will give some leverage to help with the economy and having it led by local workforce and local talent opens many possibilities."

"Having those as the important component of the business development process, there will come a time that it wouldn't matter whether a foreign development or investment will come in, as long as it can be driven by local workforce that has the skills and abilities," he added.

Nation

3 shot at eatery owned by Kandi Burruss of 'Real Housewives'

EAST POINT, Ga. (AP)—Three people were shot and wounded on Valentine's Day at a restaurant just outside Atlanta that's owned by singer and "Real Housewives of Atlanta" star Kandi Burruss.

A man entered the Old Lady Gang restaurant on Friday night and targeted another man, East Point police Capt. Allyn Glover told news outlets. Police say two bystanders were also

shot, and all three shooting victims suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

The shooter wasn't in custody, Glover said.

The names and ages of the people injured weren't immediately released.

Serving Southern cuisine, Old Lady Gang is owned by Burruss and her husband, Todd Tucker, and named after Burruss' mother and two aunts, according to the restaurant's

website. The first restaurant opened in Atlanta in 2016, and the East Point location—situated in a large shopping complex about 5 miles (8 kilometers) west of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport—followed in 2018. There's also an outpost at the Atlanta Hawks' home, State Farm Arena.

"My family and I are truly saddened by the unfortunate events

that occurred at Old Lady Gang," Burruss wrote on Instagram. "As African-American business owners, it has been our goal to invest in our community by bringing jobs, quality dining, and a positive experience to the greater Atlanta area; we hope that you know and understand that the acts of violence that occurred yesterday evening do not, in any way, serve as a reflection of OLG or its values."

Burruss has been a cast member on the "Real Housewives of Atlanta" since its second season in 2009 and met Tucker, a former line producer, on the show. She's appeared on other shows, including the 2019 iteration of "Big Brother: Celebrity Edition." She became famous in the 1990s as a member of the R&B group Xscape and co-wrote TLC's hit "No Scrubs."

ACROSS THE NATION

Another Mississippi inmate dies; no foul play suspected

An inmate in Mississippi died Saturday, making him at least the 17th inmate in the state's troubled prison system to have died in less than two months. No foul play is suspected in the death of Bobby Lewis Vance, 54, the Mississippi Department of Corrections said in a news release. Officials said Vance died at a hospital in Jackson. He had been housed at the Central Mississippi Correctional Facility in Rankin County. Vance had received a 25-year sentence in 2004 for two armed robberies. The cause and manner of Vance's death are pending an autopsy. No additional details (AP)

California death row inmate dies; prisoner killed in attack

SAN QUENTIN, Calif. (AP)—A death row inmate died Saturday at a hospital, while the previous day another prisoner was killed after two inmates attacked him, California officials said. John Abel—who was sentenced to death row for killing a man in 1991 during a robbery at a bank in Orange County—died Saturday morning at a hospital, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation said in a statement. He was 75. An autopsy will be performed to determine the cause of death, according to the department, which did not reveal the name of the hospital. Authorities do not suspect foul play, the department said.

Woman accused of damaging Jehovah's Witnesses worship place

GLEN BURNIE, Md. (AP)—Police have arrested a woman suspected of throwing a Molotov cocktail into a place of worship for Jehovah's Witnesses in Maryland, according to

court records. Heather Meisel, 43, was charged Friday after she told investigators that she damaged the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in Glen Burnie to "send a message," the Capital Gazette reported, citing charging records. Meisel, a Baltimore County resident, was arrested on charges including attempted murder and defacement of religious property. Anne Arundel County fire investigators found a door with broken glass and a Molotov cocktail made from an apple cider vinegar bottle inside the building on Thursday morning. A partially burned piece of cotton was found near the broken glass.

Mississippi braces for flooding amid cresting river

JACKSON, Miss. (AP)—Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves declared a state of emergency Saturday amid predictions that a river running in the area around the state capital of Jackson could burst its banks and spark widespread flooding.

Forecasters believe the Pearl River will crest at 38 feet (11.6 meters) Sunday evening to levels not seen in decades, following days of torrential rains across the Southeast. Reeves said the state should prepare for "the third worst flood" in its history.

"This is a historic, unprecedented flood," Reeves said via Twitter.

Parts of Jackson and suburban Ridgeland were under evacuation orders, and some people had already filled trucks with furniture and other belongings to get out. Reeves said more than 2,400 homes and other structures in and near Jackson could either be inundated or isolated by the rising waters. That includes 1,925 structures in Hinds County, 461 in Rankin County and 31 in Madison County.

"I cannot stress to you how important the next 24 to 48 hours is for the people who are going to be affected," Reeves said. He signed an emergency declaration to speed up spending for flood response and recovery. More than 96,000 sandbags had already been distributed by Saturday. The National Guard, the Highway Patrol and other high-water rescue teams were on standby, Reeves said.

"Have a plan to protect yourself and a plan to protect your loved ones," Reeves said.

Although the sun was shining Saturday in central Mississippi,



Energy workers use a boat to turn off power in flooded houses in the Canton Club Circle subdivision in northeast Jackson, Miss., Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020.

AP

Reeves and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency director Greg Michel said people in low-lying areas should not be complacent about leaving because the river was expected to crest at night and remain high for days, with rain in the forecast for Sunday and Monday.

"Do not wait until water gets into your house to evacuate," Michel urged.

Officials were bracing for what could be the worst flooding in Jackson since 1983. Nicholas Fenner, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Jackson, said the Pearl River crested at 43.2 feet on April 17, 1979—its highest level. The second-highest

level occurred May 5, 1983, when the river got up to 39.58 feet. He also said there was between \$500 million and \$700 million worth of damage in 1979, which saw 15,000 people evacuated.

The area is currently under blue skies, but Fenner warned residents against complacency.

"Even though the weather has improved, the water will be rising soon. Don't get lulled into a false sense of security," he said.

Meanwhile, the Ross Barnett Reservoir is approaching capacity, which led officials to announce that they would begin slowly releasing water at 6 p.m. Saturday. WLBT-TV reported the move is an attempt to

keep flooding to a minimum downstream, and to allow extra time for residents to get to higher ground.

John Sigman, manager of the Pearl River Water Supply District, had a phone conference with the National Weather Service and the Army Corp of Engineers on Friday. They said that areas north of the main lake have crested and were beginning to fall and described that as good news.

The crest at the reservoir is now expected Sunday morning. Officials told the television station they are holding their outflow right now at 65,000 cubic feet per second and will hold there for 48 hours, giving people downstream time to get out.

Defense attorney: Man accused of killing 8 'just snapped'

MAGNOLIA, Miss. (AP)—A man accused of killing eight people in Mississippi was fearful of the breakup of his family and "just snapped," an attorney for the defendant argued Saturday during the first day of his death penalty trial.

The killings began after Willie Cory Godbolt entered his in-laws' home in Bogue Chitto and got into an argument with his estranged wife and her family over the couple's two children, witness Vincent Mitchell testified in a Pike County courtroom, according to The Daily Leader.

Mitchell said Godbolt fatally shot

a responding deputy and then killed Godbolt's mother-in-law and two other people. Godbolt then went to two other homes in south Mississippi's Lincoln County, killing two of his teenage cousins and a husband and wife, investigators said.

Gebolt's attorney Katherine Poor told the jurors that her client, now 37, was trying to protect his family and didn't want his daughter staying at the home, since he believed she had been inappropriately touched by a family member there.



Gebolt

"Cory just snapped," Poor said. "Cory couldn't see the breakup of his family. He couldn't fail to protect his children. In that moment in a haze of fear at the breakup of his family, Cory pulled his gun out."

After being captured, Gebolt said "I'm sorry" while a reporter was recording him on a cellphone. Jurors were shown the footage Saturday in which he also said, "I just want to love my wife. I just want to love my family. I just want to love my kids."

Gebolt has pleaded not guilty to four counts of capital murder, four counts of murder, one count of attempted murder, two counts of kidnapping and one count of armed robbery. He has remained in custody since his arrest on May 28, 2017, hours after the shootings.

Because of pretrial publicity in south Mississippi, jury selection was done in north Mississippi's DeSoto County, 285 miles (459 kilometers) north of Lincoln County. The 12 jurors and three alternates were selected Friday. They are hearing the case in Magnolia, which is near Lincoln County.

The trial was scheduled to continue on Sunday.

Asia

BEIJING (AP)—China reported Sunday a drop in new virus cases for the third straight day, as it became apparent that the country's leadership was aware of the potential gravity of the situation well before the alarm was sounded.

In the early days of the epidemic, which has been one of the biggest political challenges of Chinese President Xi Jinping's tenure, Xi played a muted role. But state media published Saturday evening a speech Xi delivered Feb. 3 in which he said he gave instructions on fighting the virus as early as Jan. 7.

The disclosure indicates top leaders knew about the outbreak's potential severity weeks before such dangers were made known to the public. It was not until late January that officials said the virus can spread between humans and public alarm began to rise.

There are 2,009 new cases in mainland China, bringing its total number of confirmed cases to 68,500, according to the country's National Health Commission.

The fatality rate remained stable with 142 new deaths, the commission said. The death toll in mainland China from COVID-19, a disease stemming from a new form of coronavirus, now stands at 1,665. In all, 9,419 people have recovered and been discharged from hospital.

China's fall in new cases follows a spike of more than 15,000 on Thursday, when the central province of Hubei adopted a new diagnostic method that includes clinical diagnoses in its official account. Overwhelmed by suspected cases, the province has not been able to test every person exhibiting symptoms. The clinical diagnosis is based on doctors' analysis and lung imaging and is intended to allow probable cases to be treated as confirmed ones without the need to wait for a lab result.

The outbreak began in December in Wuhan, capital of Hubei, which has the bulk of infections.

It has since spread to more than 24 countries and prompted sweeping prevention measures from the Chinese government, including a lockdown of cities with a combined population of more than 60 million.

In his speech, Xi revealed that he ordered the shutdowns at the epicenter: "On Jan. 22, in light of the epidemic's rapid spread and the challenges of prevention and control, I made a clear request that Hubei province implement comprehensive and stringent controls over the outflow of people."

On Jan. 23, Wuhan became

In Japan, Health Minis-



A worker wearing a protective suit helps a patient carry their luggage as they arrive at a tumor hospital newly designated to treat COVID-19 patients in Wuhan in central China's Hubei Province, Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020. AP

the first city to impose an unprecedented halt on outbound transportation.

Xi was previously seen as taking a backseat in the crisis while authorities in Hubei and Wuhan faced public fury over their initial handling of the epidemic. The anger reached a peak earlier this month following the death of Li Wenliang, a young doctor who was reprimanded by local police for trying to spread a warning about the virus. He ended up dying of the disease himself.

In apparent response to the outrage, the ruling Communist Party's top officials in Hubei and Wuhan were axed and replaced last week.

The publication of Xi's speech suggests the party hopes to demonstrate it acted decisively from the beginning. But it also opens Xi up to criticism over why the general population was not alerted sooner. Trust in the government's approach to outbreaks remains fractured after the SARS epidemic of 2002 and 2003, which was covered up for months.

Even as authorities have pledged transparency through the current outbreak, they have labelled people like Li as "rumor-mongers." Citizen journalists who challenged the official narrative have disappeared and are believed to be detained.

The virus has prompted many countries to place travel restrictions on recent visitors to China.

Katsunobu Kato said that an additional 70 cases were found on the quarantined Diamond Princess cruise ship for a total of 355.

Some 400 Americans aboard the ship docked at Yokohama were told to decide by Sunday morning whether they will stay or take chartered aircraft arranged by the U.S. government to fly them back home. Those

with symptoms won't be allowed on the planes.

The flights are expected Sunday evening. Canada and Hong Kong also were arranging flights to take their residents back home. There are 255 Canadians and 330 Hong Kong residents on board or undergoing treatment in Japanese hospitals. They too would face a second quarantine.

Cost of China's anti-virus fight rises with workers idle

BEIJING (AP)— Industries from auto sales to travel to retailing effectively shut down after curbs were imposed starting Jan. 23 with the suspension of most access to Wuhan, an industrial metropolis of 11 million people at the center of the outbreak.

Travel restrictions expanded to cities with more than 60 million people, while curbs on business spread nationwide. The Lunar New Year holiday was extended to keep factories and offices closed. Nationwide, thousands of restaurants and cinemas have been shut to prevent crowds from gathering.

The rising losses threaten to become a political liability for the ruling Communist Party. Local officials have been ordered to revive business activity but are moving cautiously.

Economists warn optimism that the disease might be un-

der control is premature. Even if auto manufacturing and other business resumes as planned, activity won't be back to normal until at least mid-March.

Cambodia gets more praise for allowing cruise ship to dock

SIHANOUKVILLE, Cambodia (AP)—The cruise ship

that was allowed to dock in Cambodia after being turned away at five other ports by authorities fearful of the spread of the deadly new virus from China disembarked passengers for a second day on Saturday so they can fly home.

After being stranded at sea for two weeks, the MS Westerdam was allowed by Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen to dock for what he said were humanitarian reasons.

The Cambodian leader's decision won praise from President Donald Trump, who tweeted: "Thank you to the beautiful country of

New virus cases fall, Xi urged steps as early as Jan. 7

American Matthew Smith The Associated Press that he had already decided he and his wife are not taking the flights, because the 14-day quarantine for the ship is set to end on Wednesday. Those taking the chartered planes will be taken to Travis Air Force Base in California, with some continuing to Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, where they will

have to undergo another 14-day quarantine.

In Malaysia, an 83-year-old American woman who was a passenger on another cruise ship that was allowed to disembark in Cambodia tested positive for the virus. The Malaysian Health Ministry said 145 passengers from the MS Westerdam flew to Malaysia on Friday.

total to 12.

Health Minister Agnes Buzyn said she learned Friday night about the death of the patient, a man who tested positive for the virus in late January and had been in isolated in intensive care at a Paris hospital.

The patient, who was from the province in central China that's been hardest-hit by the virus, had a serious lung infection. All the previous deaths outside mainland China due to COVID-19, the disease the virus causes, were in Asia: one each in Japan, the Philippines and Hong Kong.

The Health Ministry announced Saturday night that France's latest case is a British person who, like five other infected Britons, had stayed in an Alpine chalet with a businessman from England who had attended a conference in Singapore. The ministry said the new patient been tested daily while in isolation at a Lyon hospital before testing positive Saturday.

World

UK faces another fierce storm; 2 found dead in rough seas

LONDON (AP)—Rescuers pulled two male bodies from rough seas off the coast of southeast England and military personnel mobilized to help build flood barriers Saturday as a second straight weekend of stormy weather wreaked havoc across Britain.

The fourth named storm of the season, dubbed Dennis by Britain's Met Office weather service, prompted widespread travel disruptions and had the potential to cause more damage than last weekend's Storm Ciara given the already saturated ground in much of the country.

The body of one man was pulled out of the sea by a lifeboat from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and followed a seven-hour search that involved a Royal Navy vessel. The search commenced before dawn after a distress call came from the B Gas Margrethe, a Maltese tanker that had been anchored off the coastal town of Margate. Police said they were trying to establish the man's identity.

Haiti officials say 15 children died in residence fire

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—A fire swept through a Haitian children's home run by a Pennsylvania-based religious nonprofit group, killing 15 children, officials said Friday.

Rose-Marie Louis, a child-care worker at the home, told The Associated Press that the fire began around 9 p.m. Thursday and firefighters took about 90 minutes to arrive. The orphanage had been using candles for light due to problems with its generator and inverter, she said.

About half of those who died were babies or toddlers and the others were roughly 10 or 11 years old, Louis said.

Late Friday afternoon, police raided another home also run by the Church of Bible Understanding and took away several dozen children in a bus over protests from employees.

The fire happened at the group's orphanage in the Kenscoff area outside Port-au-Prince, the Hai-

In a separate incident, the body of a second man was pulled from the sea in the afternoon. Authorities said the death was not being treated as suspicious.

The Met Office had 68 flood warnings in place around England, which means flooding was expected over the weekend. Another 40 had been issued in Scotland and 10 in Wales by their environmental agencies.

The number of flood warnings have spiked sharply over Saturday, a clear sign that the storm is deepening heading into Sunday. The highest wind gust, according to the Met Office, was 87 mph in Capel Curig in north Wales.

Hundreds of flights were cancelled as a result of the high winds. Easyjet, for example, cancelled around 230 flights in and out of Britain as wind speeds were set to hit 70 mph (113 kph.).

Train services were also significantly disrupted. The travel chaos

affected tens of thousands of passengers on what would typically be a busy travel day for British families since most schools are closed next week for mid-winter break.

Much of the concern about storm dangers focused on northern England, which suffered during Storm Ciara. At least eight people were killed across Europe during that storm.

On Saturday, around 75 British army personnel and 70 reservists were helping out stretched communities in the flood-hit Calder Valley region in West Yorkshire, constructing barriers and repairing damaged flood defenses.

"Our armed forces are always ready to support local authorities and communities whenever they need it," Britain's Defense Secretary Ben Wallace said. "The rapid response of the Army today will help with provision of flood relief to local communities in West Yorkshire."

tian capital.

"It could have been me," said Renadin Mondeline, a 22-year-old who lived in the home with her son, now 6, for about two years until she started making enough money as a street vendor to start renting her own place to live last year. "These little girls inside were just like my baby."

Rescue workers arrived at the scene on motorcycles and didn't have bottled oxygen or the ambulances needed to transport the children to the hospital, said Jean-Francois Robenty, a civil protection official.

"They could have been saved," he said. "We didn't have the equipment to save their lives."

The Associated Press has reported on a long-standing series of problems at the two children's homes run by the Church of Bible Understanding.

"We are aware of the fire in the children's home in Haiti," said Temi J. Sacks, a spokesman for the group, which is based in Scranton,

Pennsylvania. "It would be irresponsible for us to comment until after all the facts are in."

The Church of Bible Understanding lost accreditation for its homes after a series of inspections beginning in November 2012. Haitian inspectors faulted the group for overcrowding, unsanitary conditions and not having enough adequately trained staff.

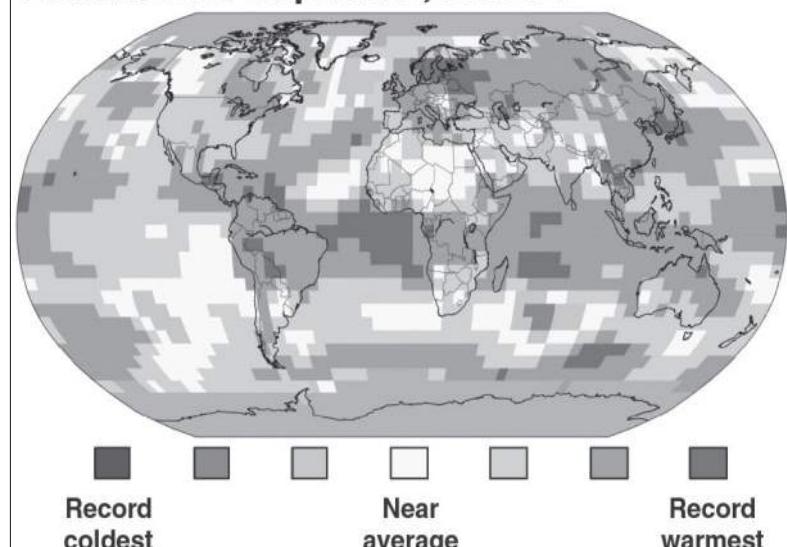
Members of the religious group were selling expensive vintage building fixtures like banisters and chandeliers at high-end stores in New York and Los Angeles and using a portion of the profits to fund the homes.

The Associated Press made an unannounced visit to the group's two homes, holding a total of 120 kids, in 2013 and found bunk beds with faded and worn mattresses crowded into dirty rooms. Sour air wafted through the bathrooms and stairwells. Rooms were dark and spartan, lacking comforts or decoration.

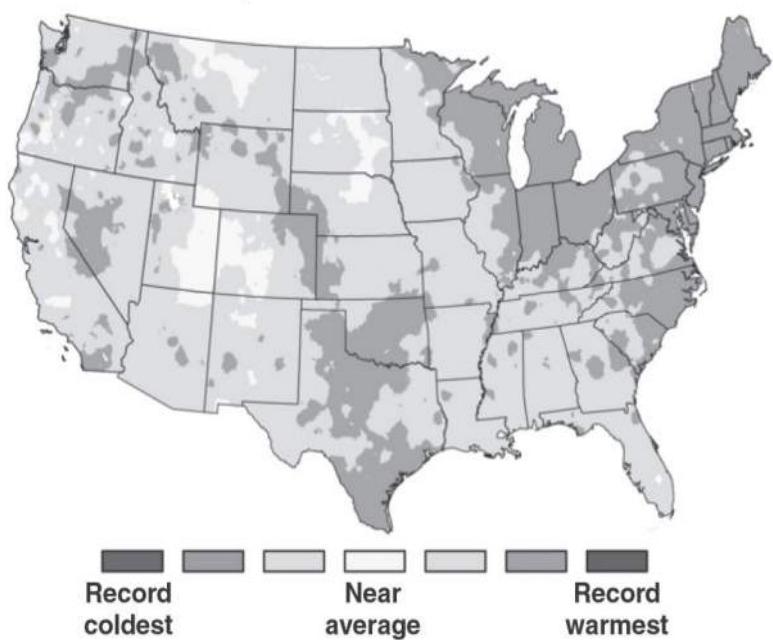
Warmest January on record

The globally averaged temperature departure from average over land and ocean surfaces for January 2020 was the highest for the month of January in the 141-year NOAA global temperature dataset record, which dates back to 1880.

Land and ocean temperatures, Jan. 2020



During January, the average contiguous U.S. temperature was 35.5°F, 5.4°F above the 20th century average, ranking fifth warmest in the 126-year record.



Source: NOAA
Graphic: Staff, TNS

WORLD BRIEFS

Rockets strike Iraqi base hosting US troops; no injuries

BAGHDAD (AP)—Small rockets struck the Iraqi base hosting American troops and other coalition forces in Baghdad's Green Zone early Sunday but caused no casualties and only minor damage, a U.S. military official said. The attack came just before 3:30 a.m., according to Col. Myles B. Cagins III, a spokesman for the U.S. military operation in Iraq. The attack was the latest in a recent series of rocket and mortar strikes on Iraqi bases housing U.S. troops. On Thursday, a mortar shell exploded in the K1 Iraqi military airbase in Kirkuk province in northern Iraq. No casualties were reported, Iraqi security officials said. An Iranian missile attack on Iraq's Ain al-Asad air base on Jan. 8 injured dozens of U.S.

service members. It was in retaliation for the U.S. drone strike in Baghdad that killed Iran's most powerful general, Qassem Soleimani, on Jan. 3.

Freezing weather compounds crisis for displaced in Syria

BEIRUT (AP)—A military offensive on an opposition-controlled region of northwestern Syria has created one of the worst catastrophes for civilians in the country's long-running war, sending hundreds of thousands of people fleeing, many of them sleeping in open fields and under trees in freezing temperatures. The military campaign in Idlib province and the nearby Aleppo countryside has also killed hundreds of civilians, and a bitter winter has compounded the pain. The weather has contributed to

at least 10 deaths, including four who suffered hypothermia, a family of four that died of suffocation in their tent and two who burned to death when their tent caught fire, according to Mohammed Hallaj, a coordinator for the area's Response Coordination Group.

Lawmaker questions China's offer to build UK high speed rail

LONDON (AP)—Allowing China's state-run rail construction company to build a high-speed rail line linking London with central and northern England would be an "extremely questionable" decision, a prominent British lawmaker said Saturday. Tom Tugendhat, a Conservative lawmaker who chairs the U.K. parliament's influential Foreign Affairs Committee,

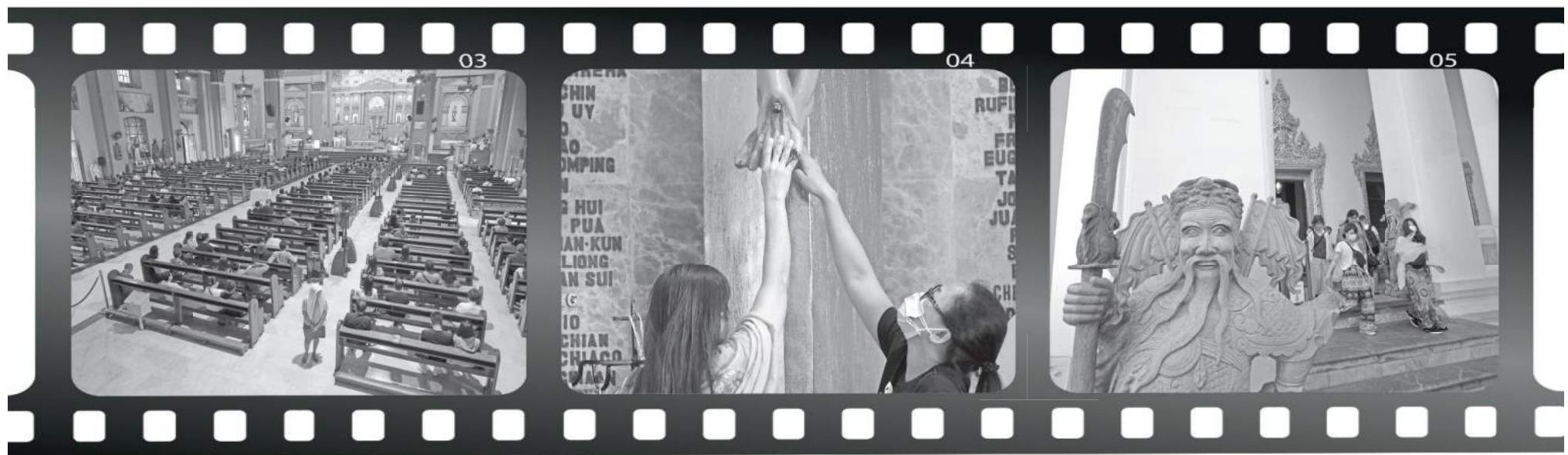
told BBC radio that he also had doubts about the ability of China Railway Construction Corporation (CRCC) to build the rail line in five years, given the vast differences between the two countries on issues such as planning applications, property rights and protected landscapes. The company has transformed China's transport system, building most of China's 15,500-mile high-speed network over the past couple of decades.

UN official says airstrikes kill over 30 civilians in Yemen

SANA'A, Yemen (AP)—Strikes killed more than 30 civilians in a mountainous northern Yemeni province Saturday, the U.N. humanitarian chief for the country said, calling the attack "shocking." The Yemeni

rebels, known as Houthis, accused the Saudi-led coalition of launching retaliatory airstrikes, after they shot down a coalition warplane over the province of Jawf. Saudi Arabia's state-run news agency quoted Col. Turki al-Maliki, a spokesman for the coalition, as saying it was investigating "possible collateral damage" from a rescue operation in the area after the downing of the Tornado warplane late Friday. Al-Maliki was quoted as saying the plane was providing air support for Yemeni government forces fighting the Houthis. He said the two-pilot crew of the Tornado managed to eject safely before the crash, claiming that the Houthis opened fire on them. He said the Houthis were responsible for the pilots' "life and safety," according to Saudi Arabia's official news agency

Focus



In this Feb. 10, 2020, photo, half empty pews are seen during a mass at the Minor Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz in Manila's Chinatown, Philippines.

In this Feb. 10, 2020, photo, a Catholic woman wearing a protective mask touches an image of Jesus Christ at the Minor Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz in Manila's Chinatown, Philippines.

In this Feb. 7, 2020, photo, tourists wearing face masks leave after touring the statue of a giant Buddha at Wat Pho in Bangkok, Thailand.

No handshakes: Viral outbreak spooks Asian places of worship

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—In a popular Catholic church in the Philippines, nearly half of the pews were empty for Sunday Mass. The few hundred worshippers who showed up were asked to refrain from shaking others' hands or holding them during prayers to prevent the spread of the virus that started in China.

In Hong Kong, Cardinal John Hon Tong, wearing a mask, announced the suspension of public Masses for two weeks and urged churchgoers to instead watch them online.

Buddhist temples, Christian churches and Muslim mosques have been ordered closed since Jan. 29 in mainland China, where the new coronavirus strain was first detected in the central city of Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak. Mosques have canceled weekly Friday prayers since January under an order to avoid "collective religious activities."

Religious leaders should encourage Muslims to "trust the party" and avoid crowds, the Communist Party-controlled

body that oversees China's officially authorized mosques said in a statement.

The restrictions and dwindling crowds in religiously diverse places of worship underscore the extent of the scare over the outbreak that has permeated many aspects of life in the hard-hit Asian region. The virus has killed more than 1,500 people and infected more than 67,000 others, mostly in China, where several cities that are home to more than 60 million people have been placed under lockdown in an unprecedented effort to contain the disease.

All but three of the deaths have been in China. Japan, Hong Kong and the Philippines have reported one fatality each.

In Japan, where Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines are tourist destinations, a sharp decline in the number of foreign visitors has been a palpable setback. At normally popular Suzumushi, or Crickets, temple, a sign read, "Due to the impact of the COVID-19, no waiting expected," using the name given to the disease by the World Health Organization.

"We assimilate with parish-

ioners and many other people. We know that the talk of the town is really this virus and it's obvious that many are scared," said the Rev. Siegfred Arellano, a priest at the Binondo church in the Philippine capital's Chinatown.

Attendance at Masses, Arellano said, "has really dropped."

After consulting health experts, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines announced steps late last month to fight the virus. Churchgoers were advised to avoid hand contact and receive the Eucharist, which symbolizes the body of Jesus Christ, in the hand instead of the mouth.

They said holy water should be replaced more often in church stoups and a protective cloth installed on the grills separating priests and worshippers in confessional boxes.

In Hong Kong, Tong initially approved precautions that included a choice for churchgoers to watch Sunday Mass online. Those who opted to go to churches were asked to wear masks and told that "singing is suspended," except

for short hymns like "Alleluia." The new virus is spread through respiratory droplets, according to health officials.

Tong later announced the two-week suspension of Masses, saying the move was crucial to suppressing the outbreak, and asked Hong Kong's 400,000-strong Catholic community not to panic.

Masses in Singapore's Catholic churches have also been suspended indefinitely starting Saturday to contain the spread of the virus. The city-state has reported that 67 people have been infected, including a senior pastor and several members of the Grace Assembly of God church, which has shut down two premises and quarantined all staff.

Crowds also have thinned at Bangkok's popular Wat Pho, a centuries-old Buddhist temple complex known for its giant reclining Buddha. The temple is normally visited by thousands of tourists, many of them Chinese, during the peak travel season from December to February, but large numbers of visitors as well as locals have stayed away since the outbreak began, said Phra Maha Udom Panyapho, a

monk in charge of tourism at the temple.

A Protestant church in Seoul shut its doors and switched entirely to online worship services after one of its followers tested positive for the virus on Jan. 30.

Other Protestant churches in South Korea have sprayed their halls and rooms with disinfectant, canceled children's Bible school programs and asked followers to minimize socializing. Hundreds of Catholic churches in the country have halted the use of holy water stoups, allowed churchgoers to wear masks during Masses and discouraged those with flu-like symptoms or those who came from countries with confirmed cases of infection from attending.

Unlike public areas such as shopping malls, recreational centers and parks, discouraging the devout from going to their places of worship and imposing other restrictions on sacred sites can be extra sensitive. Amid the risks, some devotees consider going to religious gatherings as a test of faith.

"The virus can't dampen my faith," said Rey Gilber, a 55-year-old father of two who went to Mass at the Binondo

church in Manila with his family. "God is always there and won't abandon us."

A key mosque in Malaysia's administrative capital of Putrajaya and two other mosques briefly closed their doors last month to non-Muslim visitors amid the virus scare, but later reopened after Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad called the move irresponsible.

Tens of thousands of ethnic Hindus, meanwhile, gathered last weekend to celebrate an annual festival called Thaipusam in the central Malaysian state of Selangor, undeterred by the outbreak. Malaysia has reported 19 cases of the virus.

Still, hundreds of staff and temple workers along with two dozen ambulances stood by. Emergency medical outposts were established as a precaution at the Batu Caves temple on a limestone hill, where pilgrims and tourists descended to watch devotees pierce their skin with hooks and skewers and carry offerings up a flight of 272 steps to the temple.

"We will not get the virus because God exists here," said Saratha, a 60-year-old housewife.



In this Feb. 13, 2020, photo, a Buddhist monk from Vietnam wearing a face mask walks amid Buddhist statues at Wat Pho in Bangkok, Thailand.

In this Feb. 8, 2020, photo, a Hindu devotee smiles as she lowers down her face mask during a procession at the Thaipusam festival at Batu Caves in Selangor, Malaysia.

In this Feb. 10, 2020, photo, a Catholic woman wearing a protective mask touches an image of Jesus Christ at the Minor Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz in Manila's Chinatown, Philippines.

In this Feb. 13, 2020, photo, a Buddhist monk adjusts his face mask at the Wat Pho in Bangkok, Thailand.

Health & Wellness

By SOUMYA KARLAMANGLA
LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

U.S. hospitals are stocking up on gowns and goggles and holding refresher courses in infection control amid a growing outbreak of a novel strain of coronavirus that has already killed more than 1,360 people in China.

Since it began spreading last year, the coronavirus now known as COVID-19 has prompted the World Health Organization to declare a global health emergency, caused U.S. officials to strongly advise against travel to China and led some experts to predict a worldwide pandemic.

In the United States, just 14 people have been diagnosed with the coronavirus so far, though officials say they expect those numbers to rise. Hundreds of people have already shown up at American health care facilities with symptoms of the virus, forcing staff members to don face masks and put patients in isolation rooms while awaiting test results.

In addition to the 14 people confirmed to have the virus in the U.S. as

of Wednesday, 413 others have been tested for it; 347 tested negative, and results are still pending for 66, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The virus' symptoms, such as fever and cough, resemble those of the flu, which is in the height of its season in the U.S.

So far, the virus does not appear to be any more contagious than the flu or a cold, though scientists are learning more as cases mount. Because of the ever-evolving situation, the CDC is recommending that doctors and hospitals adopt a "cautious approach" when treating coronavirus patients in their facilities.

This is how that approach would play out if you visited a hospital to be treated for the coronavirus.

A CORONAVIRUS WARD? How US hospitals are preparing for this new threat

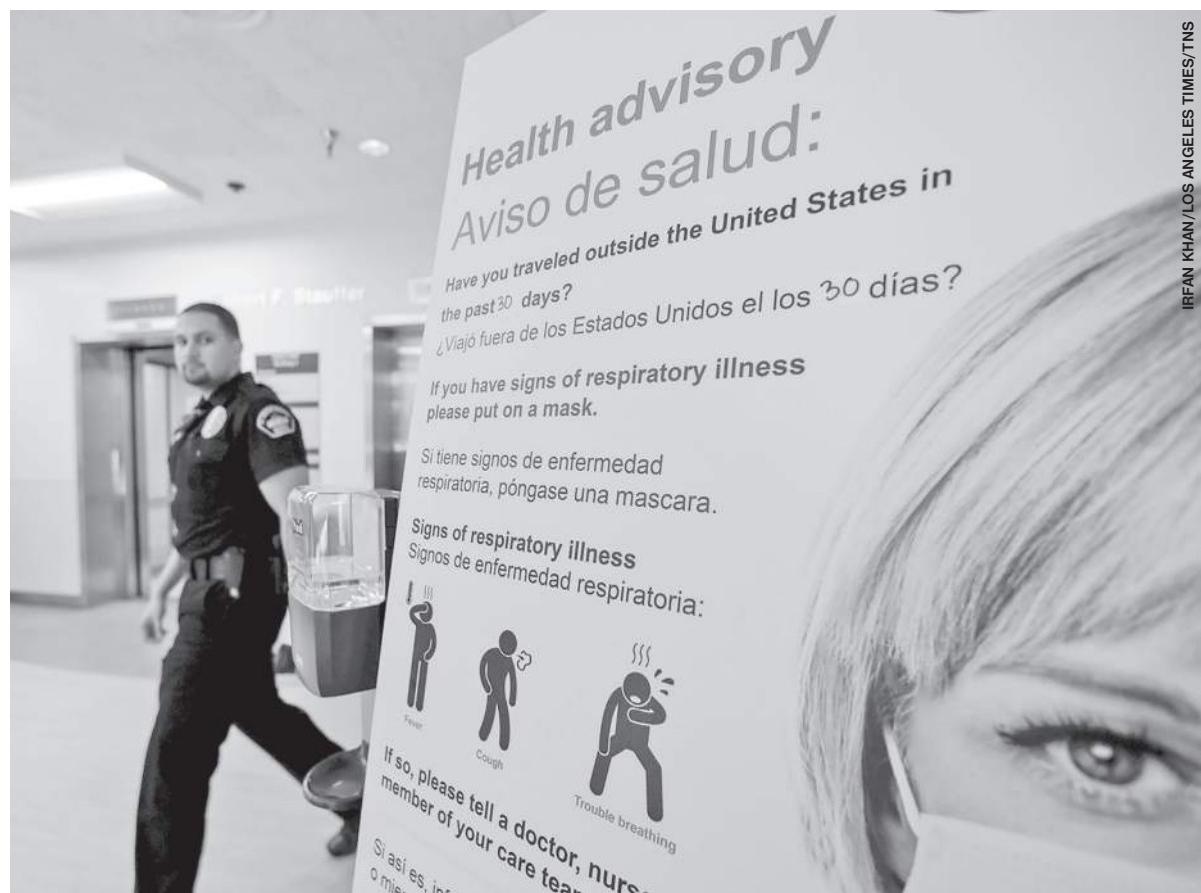


Dr. Brian Lee, emergency department medical director at St. Joseph Medical Center in Orange, Calif., on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020. U.S. hospitals are stocking up on gowns and goggles and holding refresher courses in infection control amid a growing outbreak of a novel strain of coronavirus.

This advertorial is sponsored by



Tan Siu Lin Foundation



Coronavirus health advisory posted in the emergency department at St. Joseph Medical Center in Orange, Calif., on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020.

STEP 1 TRIAGE

Patients suspected of having the coronavirus are required to wear face masks and be placed in a separate room away from other patients while they await treatment. Because the virus can travel up to 6 feet in the air when someone coughs or sneezes, the CDC recommends maintaining at least that distance between the patient and all others to prevent the spread of infection.

"If you have traveled to China, please let us know immediately, even before you walk into a crowded waiting room," said Dr. Brian Lee, emergency department medical director at St. Joseph Hospital in Orange, Calif. "We can't read minds."

A doctor then interviews the patient about their symptoms and travel history. Patients must meet specific criteria to qualify for testing, including travel to China in the last 14 days.

Patients are typically admitted to the hospital for treatment while they await results of the test, which is usually done through a nasal swab. In some cases, patients with mild illness can self-quarantine at home.

STEP 2 'NEGATIVE PRESSURE' ISOLATION ROOMS

Admitted patients are placed in "negative pressure" rooms, which keep air from seeping out into the rest of the hospital. The air from these special rooms is eventually released outside instead of being recirculated through the hospital.

Such rooms are typically used for patients with diseases such as tuberculosis and measles. They are standard in hospitals, unlike the special chambers some facilities set up to handle Ebola cases in 2014.

"To the patient, it looks exactly like any other treatment room," said Dr.

Michael Mesisca, emergency department medical director at Riverside University Health System Medical Center in Southern California.

The Riverside hospital, which has been receiving people quarantined at March Air Reserve Base, has tested patients for the coronavirus but has had no tests come back positive, he said.

STEP 3 KEEPING STAFF SAFE

All health care personnel who interact with infected patients wear gowns, gloves, goggles and masks. Though the coronavirus isn't believed to be more contagious than the flu, scientists don't know everything about it yet.

"We're using what the CDC likes to call an abundance of caution," said Dr. Shira Doron, an infectious disease specialist at Tufts Medical Center in Boston.

In San Jose, Calif., five health care workers at Good Samaritan Hospital were put on two-week leave after public health officials determined they had contact with a confirmed coronavirus patient.

With suspected and confirmed coronavirus patients, staff members who can enter the room are limited to the patient's doctor and nurse. Staffers keep a log of everyone who enters the room. Patients aren't allowed visitors and are encouraged to communicate with their loved ones by phone or video chat.

Hospital workers don't typically wear face shields or goggles when treating flu patients, but otherwise the precautions are not too different from caring for people with seasonal influenza. Many other diseases that hospitals regularly treat require these precautions, Doron said.

"This isn't something very out of the ordinary for us," she said.

STEP 4 TREATING THE PATIENT

There aren't any treatments specific to this novel coronavirus, so doctors do what they can to alleviate a patient's symptoms, which could include administering IV fluids and monitoring lung function. More severe cases may need to be put on a ventilator to help them breathe.

Positive test results do not change a patient's treatment plan because doctors are already treating the symptoms, they say.

STEP 5 CALMING OTHER PATIENTS

Hearing that coronavirus patients are in the hospital can be scary for other patients and their families.

Last week at Rady Children's Hospital San Diego, a 3-year-old girl and her father were admitted as suspected coronavirus cases after they fled China last week. Both have since been cleared and discharged.

Dr. Nicholas Holmes, the hospital's chief operating officer, said staff members emphasized that they were following proper hygiene protocol and doing everything possible to limit the spread of the virus. He said they also reminded patients and their families that the flu is a bigger concern than coronavirus.

"We always have to address those concerns for parents," he said. "It's really educating the families about what coronavirus is, as well as what are the other infectious diseases in the community at large."

Lee, of St. Joseph Hospital, agreed that the flu remains a larger threat than coronavirus for Americans and requires more hospital resources as influenza patients continue to seek treatment.

"Our main ask to the public is: Don't panic," he said.

Life & Style

Ex-'Love Island' host Caroline Flack found dead in London

LONDON (AP)—Caroline Flack, a British television presenter who hosted the controversial reality TV show "Love Island," has died at age 40, her family said Saturday.

"We can confirm that our Caroline passed away today, the 15th of February," the family said in a statement. A family lawyer said Flack had killed herself and was found in her London apartment.

Flack hosted "Love Island"

from its launch in 2015, but stepped down last year after being charged with assaulting her boyfriend, Lewis Burton. She denied the charge and was scheduled to stand trial starting next month.

British commercial network ITV, which broadcasts the show, said in a statement



Flack

that "everybody at 'Love Island' and ITV is shocked and saddened by this desperately sad news."

"Caroline was a much-loved member of the 'Love Island' team, and our

sincere thoughts and condolences are with her family and friends," the network statement said.

Prosecutor: Weinstein saw victims as 'complete disposables'

NEW YORK (AP)—Harvey Weinstein considered himself such a big shot in Hollywood that he thought he could get away with treating aspiring actresses like "complete disposables," a prosecutor told a jury in closing arguments Friday at his New York City rape trial.

"The universe is run by me, and therefore, they don't get to complain when they are stepped on, spit on, demoralized and, yes, raped and abused by me—the king," Assistant District Attorney Joan Illuzzi-Orbon said, mimicking Weinstein.

Using a TV monitor next to the jury box, the prosecutors displayed photos of "Sopranos" actress Annabella Sciorra and five other accusers who also testified. Illuzzi told jurors that, putting aside the more successful Sciorra, who dined with Uma Thurman and dated Gary Oldman, the women were viewed by Weinstein as "complete disposables."

"These other women, they were never in his world," Illuzzi said. "They are never going to be in his world. They are never going to be strong enough, bold enough or brave enough to tell. But Annabella—someone might believe her."

Illuzzi also showed a



Harvey Weinstein, center, leaves a Manhattan courthouse after closing arguments in his rape trial in New York, Friday, Feb. 14, 2020.

AP

side-by-side comparison of Sciorra's testimony about confronting Weinstein in the mid-1990s—after she accuses him of raping her—and similar testimony by the woman he's charged with raping in 2013 about how the mogul reacted when she told him she had a boyfriend.

"His eyes went black and I thought he was going to hit me right there," Sciorra testified. With the click of a button, the rape accuser's testimony popped up: "His eyes changed and he was not there. They were very black and he ripped me up."

At times, Weinstein sat back in his chair staring ahead at a screen in front of the defense table that mirrored what was being shown to the seven men and five women on the jury.

After sitting through the three-hour summation, Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. shot reporters a thumbs up. Meanwhile, Weinstein's lawyers said the film producer was confident, heading into the long weekend before the start of deliberations Tuesday.

"The evidence is all on our side," Weinstein's lawyer Donna Rotunno said.

Illuzzi's closing comes a day after Rotunno offered an epic, hourslong defense closing argument, painting the prosecution's case as a "sinister tale" absent proof needed to convict Weinstein.

PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB SAIPAN

To our valued CNMI residents and Club Members,

Please note that starting February 17th, 2020, Pacific Islands Club Saipan will begin implementing reduced operation hours to its Water Park. This schedule will remain in effect until further notice.

For your convenience, we are offering reduced prices on our Waterpark and Magellan Lunch promotions.

For more details, please call: (670) 237 - 5157

Interested in our Waterpark & Magellan Lunch Promo?

Check out our Facebook page for details or for inquiries please call : (670) 237 - 5104 / 5156



The sixth season of the show is currently airing. A "Love Island" highlights episode titled "Unseen Bits" that was set to air Saturday evening on ITV2 was pulled from the schedule after Flack's death was announced.

The next new "Love Island" episode is scheduled for broadcast on Sunday. The network did not indicate if it will air it.

"Love Island" deposits young and attractive contestants in a tropical paradise,

where they must pair up or risk being exiled. Critics claim the program puts vulnerable young people under intense scrutiny and pressure, increased by blanket tabloid newspaper coverage of the show.

Weinstein trial: Closing arguments, two universes

NEW YORK (AP)—Harvey Weinstein grinned as he left court, and his lawyers said he was confident heading into what could be his last weekend of freedom as his New York City rape trial moves closer to a verdict.

Jurors are set to start deliberating Tuesday, their task put off a day because court is closed Monday for Presidents Day.

The prosecution and defense left the panel of seven men and five women with plenty to think about as they summed up their cases for and against convicting the movie producer in closing arguments on back-to-back days, Thursday and Friday.

Weinstein, 67, is charged with raping a woman in a Manhattan hotel room in 2013 and forcibly performing oral

sex on another woman, TV and film production assistant Mimi Haleyi, in 2006.

Jurors will also be weighing actress Annabella Sciorra's account of a mid-1990s rape in considering charges alleging Weinstein is a sexual predator, even though it is too old to be charged on its own.

Weinstein maintains any sexual conduct was consensual.

The Associated Press has a policy of not publishing the names of people who allege sexual assault without their consent; it is withholding the name of the rape accuser because it isn't clear whether she wishes to be identified publicly.

The closing arguments were the highlight of the fourth week of testimony and arguments at the landmark #MeToo trial.

DEFENSE: 'FACTS MATTER, EVIDENCE MATTERS'

Weinstein lawyer Donna Rotunno suggested Thursday that prosecutors created an "alternative universe" and a "sinister tale" because they lacked evidence to convict the former studio boss.

"In their story, they have created a universe that strips adult women of common sense, autonomy and responsibility," Rotunno said. "It is offensive, actually."

Rotunno, a #MeToo critic, argued that the two women Weinstein is charged with attacking were opportunists who willingly latched on to the powerful producer and acquiesced to sex because they thought it would help their careers.

MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION



We the family of the late

†Rex Indalecio Palacios

would like to extend our heartfelt thank you, yan un dangkulu na si yu'us ma'ase, and sulang for your prayers, support, kind words of comfort, and most especially your presence, during this time of great pain and sorrow.

It is greatly appreciated.

A special thank you to the techas who led us in prayers
Ms. Ana Q. Lizama and Auntie Marcie P. Cepeda.

Si Yu'us Ma'ase Ginen I familia

'Parasite' shines light on South Korean basement dwellers

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Kim Da-hye, a 29-year-old South Korean, said that moving into a semi-basement apartment was her least-preferred option when she was looking for a new place to live.

But after a rigorous search and a close examination of her finances, she was forced to settle for a "banjiha," the Korean word for a cramped basement flat.

South Korean director Bong Joon-ho's Oscar-winning film "Parasite" has brought banjiha dwellers like Kim to worldwide attention, thanks to its depiction of two families—one living in a semi-basement apartment and the other in an airy mansion—and the differences in their social status.

In 2015, around 1.9% of South Koreans lived in semi-basement apartments, according to data from Statistics Korea. It's an affordable choice for urban dwellers in Seoul, one of the most expensive cities in Asia.

The apartments, which are often cramped and sometimes squalid, generally cost between \$210 and \$500 a month with a hefty deposit.

Kim, who moved into her \$211-a-month banjiha apartment after leaving her job to take care of her mother, is no fan of her current accommodations, which flood during the rainy season.



Kim Da-hye, a 29-year-old South Korean, talks about her semi-basement apartment in Seoul, South Korea, Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020. AP

"During one summer, I left the house with the window open," she said. "When I came back, there was water all over and the walls were wet."

She says that when she dries her laundry, "the walls get damp and my laundry smells."

Prior to moving in, she was very concerned about the apartment's toilet, which sits much higher than the floor in order to prevent flooding. "My

bathroom has stairs just like that place," Kim said, referring to the basement toilet in the film that spews out filthy sludge during a flood that destroys the house.

"I could slip while climbing the stairs," Kim said, laughing and pointing at the two steep steps leading to the square bathroom. She joked that she doesn't attempt to go to the bathroom when she's drunk.

Since the apartment is half underground, it is difficult for sunlight to seep through the window, causing the walls to mold.

"It's easy to see inside from outside and vice versa," Kim said, adding that her window also invites dust from cars and motorcycles on the street.

She said she has mixed feelings about the film despite sharing her name—Da-hye—with the daughter of the affluent family.

"At the start of the movie when an image flashed of a drunkard who was peeing on the street, I didn't find it funny," she said. "I felt a bit bitter because (the movie) had moments I could totally relate to. I had mixed feelings because it didn't feel like someone else's story."

"I thought it really resembled reality," Kim said. "(The father in the movie) wanted to climb higher but ended up going lower than where he was before. That's similar to how I feel about my future."

Winfrey holds TV discussion on 'American Dirt' in Arizona

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—Oprah Winfrey's soon-to-be televised discussion about the controversial novel "American Dirt" is drawing scrutiny for not inviting some of the book's harshest Latino critics.

The talk show host organized her much-hyped conversation with author Jeanine Cummins on Thursday after inviting around 250 people to the Harkins Theatres Arizona Pavilions in southern Arizona, the Arizona Daily Star reports. The crowd was then directed to another Tucson, Arizona, location and asked to sign a nondisclosure agreement.

The discussion will be the next episode in Winfrey's new Apple TV+ series Oprah's Book Club, which features personal conversations with authors in front of a live audience.

Details of the gathering were not known since the audience was banned from speaking about the event until after the show airs



Winfrey

in March.

The novel about a Mexican mother and her young son fleeing to the U.S. border had been praised widely before its Jan. 21 release. But

anger built over allegations the book relied on stereotypes, caricatures, and material similar to another Latino writer.

Latino critics also blasted promotional stunts at book release parties that had floral art centerpieces with barbed wire mimicking the border wall.

Oprah chose the novel for her book club shortly after its release, drawing more anger from Latino critics.

In a video posted on Instagram following the criticism, Winfrey said she now realizes the book struck "an emotional chord" with Latinos and created a need for deeper conversation.

On Wednesday, the group #DignidadLiteraria posted an open letter to Winfrey on the site Literary Hub calling for deeper conversations about "the continued under-

representation of (Latino) authors in publishing and in your highly influential book club."

The letter mentioned the Tucson event and called for a private meeting with Winfrey and their movement.

"We urge to you open your mind and heart to actual Latinos the way you have publicly declared you did to Jeanine's fictional characters," the letter read.

Writer Roberto Lovato, one of the signers of the letter, wrote on Twitter about not receiving an invitation to Winfrey's Tucson event.

"People are starting to enter @Oprah's 'all sides,' completely staged #AmericanDirt spectacle for @AppleTV in Tucson. Though we were not invited & though we're interested in talking re industry, not spectacles, she will be hearing from #DignidadLiteraria," he wrote.

The episode, which is set to debut in March, is the third installment of the series. The first two episodes were hour-long conversations with book club authors Ta-Nehisi Coates and Elizabeth Strout.

Ticketing plan for Kobe Bryant public memorial released

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Los Angeles Lakers announced Friday that fans seeking to attend the Feb. 24 memorial for Kobe Bryant and his daughter, Gianna, at Staples Center must register to purchase tickets and there will be no outside overflow areas.

Tickets will be priced at \$224 each, two for \$224 and \$24.02 each—combinations of numbers that like the date, 2/24, represent the No. 24 worn by Bryant and the No. 2 worn by Gianna on her girls basketball team.

Proceeds from the ticket sales will benefit the Mamba and Mambacita Sports Foundation, the Lakers said.

Ticket registration was to extend from 11 a.m. Friday through 10 p.m. Monday through the Ticketmaster Verified Fan system. On Tuesday, registered fans will receive emails with non-transferable personal access codes that will allow them to participate

in the public sale on Wednesday morning.

In a move apparently intended to prevent a repeat of the massive crowds that flocked to Staples after Bryant's death, the Lakers said the memorial will not be shown on exterior video screens at the arena or the adjacent L.A. Live entertainment area.

Members of the public without tickets to the memorial were advised not to come near the arena or L.A. Live because they will not be able to enter the area, the team said.

The Lakers' statement did not include any details about the memorial itself.

Staples Center, known as "the house that Kobe built," is where Bryant starred for most of his 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers.

Bryant, his 13-year-old daughter and seven others were killed Jan. 26 when the helicopter they were aboard crashed in

Calabasas, California, as they were flying to a basketball tournament where Gianna was to play with her team.

Bryant and Gianna were buried Feb. 7 at Pacific View Memorial Park in Corona del Mar, California, near the family home, according to death certificates.

On Monday, several thousand people came to Angel Stadium of Anaheim to mourn three of the other victims: Orange Coast College baseball coach John Altobelli, his wife, Keri, and their daughter, Alyssa, who was Gianna's teammate.

Also killed in the crash were Christina Mauser, who helped Bryant coach the girls basketball team, as well as Sarah Chester and her daughter, Payton, another of Gianna's teammates, and pilot Ara Zobayan.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board.

Spoiler: George Washington lies, stands tall in docuseries

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—George Washington is the leading man in historian Doris Kearns Goodwin's first venture as a TV producer, a docudrama that follows his growth from ambitious young soldier to statesman.

Spoiler alert for "Washington," airing 8 p.m. EST Sunday through Tuesday on the History channel: The future president does tell a lie, and it's a dismaying whopper. In the series that combines re-enactments with expert commentary, myth gives way to

checkered reality without diminishing his stature.

Nicholas Rowe ("The Crown," "Young Sherlock Holmes") plays Washington in re-creations of pivotal moments in his adult life, with historians including Jon Meacham and Annette Gordon-Reed and former Secretary of State Colin Powell among those providing context and insights.

Although producing is new to Kearns Goodwin, her knack for narrative is on display in books including the Pulitzer Prize-

winning Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt chronicle, "No Ordinary Time," and "Team of Rivals," about President Abraham Lincoln's wartime cabinet that included William Seward and Salmon Chase. It was adapted for Stephen Spielberg's Oscar-winning "Lincoln."

Goodwin spoke with The Associated Press about the making of a leader and connecting the dots between history and current events. Excerpts from the interview have been edited for clarity and brevity.

Gayle King accepts Snoop Dogg's apology for rant over Kobe Bryant

NEW YORK (AP)—Gayle King says she accepts Snoop Dogg's apology, and the CBS anchor says she's sorry that her interview last week added to the pain of people grieving over Kobe Bryant's death.



Snoop Dogg

anger, Snoop Dogg was criticized for the ugliness of his threat. He posted an apology on Instagram, saying "when you're wrong, you gotta fix it."

"I accept the apology and understand the raw emotions caused by this tragic loss," King said in a statement to The Associated Press.

She said it was never her intention to add to the pain.

"As a journalist, it is sometimes challenging to balance doing my job with the emotions and feelings during difficult times," King said. "I don't always get it perfect but I'm constantly striving to do it with compassion and integrity."

While others shared his

Full board of France's Cesar film awards steps down

PARIS (AP)—The entire leadership of the Cesar Awards, France's version of the Oscars, has stepped down in a spat over both its opaque decision-making process and controversial director Roman Polanski, whose new film leads this year's nominations.

The decision by the academy's influential board to resign en masse came Thursday evening, just two weeks before the glitzy 2020 award ceremony.

Multiple nominations for Polanski's "An Officer and a Spy" triggered calls by feminist groups for a boycott of the awards as an expression of outrage against the ceremony and the director. He was accused of sexual assault by a French woman just three months ago, allegations he denies.

Nominating Polanski's movie in 12 categories this year represented a last straw

for the already-roiled academy board, who had expressed frustration over the closed nature of the age-old award's decision-making structure.

"To honor the men and women who made cinema happen in 2019, to find calm and ensure that the festival of film remains just that, a festival, the board ... has decided to resign unanimously," the academy said in a statement.

"This collective decision will allow complete renewal," it added.

Polanski has been a fugitive from the U.S. for more than four decades after pleading guilty in 1977 to unlawful sex with a 13-year-old girl. He fled the U.S. in 1978. But in November, French daily Le Parisien reported claims from a French woman that she was assaulted at age 18 in 1975 by Polanski at his chalet in Gstaad, Switzerland.

1 dead, 4 injured in shooting outside Berlin music venue

BERLIN (AP)—One person has been killed and 4 others were injured in a shooting late Friday outside a Berlin event venue, German authorities said Saturday.

A spokeswoman for Berlin prosecutors said one or

more people opened fire outside the Tempodrom, located near Potsdamer Platz in the center of the city, before fleeing the scene.

A 42-year-old man was killed, spokeswoman Mona Lorenz told The Associated

Press. Four others were injured, some seriously. Lorenz couldn't confirm whether the injuries resulted from gunfire.

Investigators don't have any indication yet about what motivated the shooting but it doesn't appear to be terrorism-

related, Lorenz said.

The incident took place on a square in front of the Tempodrom as a Turkish comedy night was being staged inside.

Berlin has one of the highest number of killings per person among European capitals.

Lynn Cohen, who played Magda in 'Sex and the City,' dies

NEW YORK (AP)—Lynn Cohen, an actress best known for playing the plainspoken housekeeper and nanny Magda in "Sex and the City," has died. She was 86.

Cohen died Friday in New York City, said her manager,

Josh Pultz. Additional details were not immediately available.

A native of Kansas City, Missouri, Cohen had a long and diverse career as a stage, film and television performer. Her dozens of credits

ranged from "Nurse Jackie" and "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" to the feature films "Across the Universe" and "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire."

In HBO's "Sex and City," Cohen's character was em-

ployed by attorney Miranda Hobbes, played by Cynthia Nixon. Magda was featured in the television and movie versions of the popular show, which also starred Sarah Jessica Parker, Kristin Davis and Kim Cattrall.

Ryan's Secret show brings awareness to male body positivity

NEW YORK (AP)—The debate over unrealistic body ideals for women is a long-standing one, but the same discussion over expectations for men hasn't reached the same cultural pitch.

That was the motivation behind Ryan's Secret, a different kind of show at New York Fashion Week that featured plus size men proudly baring skin.

"Especially being a big guy myself, going for job interviews, if you're not looking like some studly guy, sometimes you don't get the job. Just like Barbie has the same issues, Ken has even more," said 36-year-old Joseph Diaz, one of the models at Wednesday night's show.

Diaz walked in black embellished bicycle shorts and a matching cape for the gods-themed show.

Ryan's Secret creative director and designer Myriam Chalek wanted to bring awareness to young men who experience depression and commit suicide because of body shaming and bullying. She also



AP

Joseph Diaz walks the runway in a fashion show Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2020, aimed at shining a light on male body shaming issues and the importance of the male body positivity movement.

pointed to steroid abuse and men who submit themselves to punishing gym routines to attain superhero bodies.

The message was clear: End male body shaming.

"Yeah, I'm body positive, I think it's a good message to show people that you love your body, you love yourself," said model Daniel Jean. "You know it's hard out there the

way the media portrays you, you know, especially when you're a big guy."

Jean walked in royal purple satin. He was among 15 plus size men to participate.

Roadside memorial grows in homeowner's front yard

DEAR ABBY: I need some help. A terrible car accident happened in front of my house a few months ago that resulted in the death of a husband and father. The family comes out every Sunday to place flowers at the accident site, which is my front yard. At first, I had no problem with them expressing their grief and tried to console the widow every time I saw her. The problem is, she has gradually added to the area a memorial stone, an angel statue, vases and some of her husband's belongings. My front yard is beginning to look like a graveyard—a tacky one.

Now she's asking to place a protective shelter over the site. I don't know how to respond. My husband is threatening to go and pull everything up as it is. To add to the stress of all this, another fatal accident occurred last month, resulting in the death of a 22-year-old. He was the son of one of my children's teachers. I can't imagine what she must be feeling right now, passing our home and seeing the graveyard out front. It must be heartbreaking. We live on a dangerous road, and we are petitioning for changes, but I don't want to make our front yard a spectacle.

GRIEVING IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR GRIEVING: You are obviously a caring person or you wouldn't have allowed this situation to have gone as far as it has. It won't be a pleasant conversation, but the time has come for you and your husband to talk with the widow together and explain that while you sympathize with her devastating loss, you prefer your yard not be used this

way. You have that right. It's private property.

Suggest to her that there may be some other way to memorialize her husband, but you need the stone and other objects removed within a reasonable time frame. You may also want to check with your local officials to see what the laws are about this.

DEAR ABBY: I've been happily married for 34 years, and my wife and I are supportive of each other. She's a gourmet cook, and I'm an OK one. She takes extra care when she cooks. She wants her meals to be exceptional, and I appreciate it.

Sometimes she will cook something like an awesome enchilada casserole or pork loin. When she serves it, I like to add lots of other toppings, like sour cream and hot sauce or BBQ sauce. I don't do it with everything—just with certain dishes. I always taste the food first, but I know how I like my food, and I season it the way I like.

She wishes I would eat her food the way she prepared it. She insists that by altering the dish, I ruin her creation, which is disrespectful. I disagree. I should be allowed to enjoy my food the way I want and not be made to feel bad about it.

Why would she want me to enjoy my meal less by not fixing it up the way I enjoy? We both agreed to seriously consider what you have to say about this.

RECIPE FOR DISASTER IN TEXAS

DEAR RECIPE: Your wife feels creative pride in the

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

meals she prepares for you. When you alter them with "lots of" sour cream, hot sauce or BBQ sauce, she may feel that somehow her creation was a failure. Reassure her that her meals are excellent, but not everyone has the same palate. It may have something to do with the geographic region in which a person was raised, or the household in which someone grew up.

If you need certain dishes spicier in order to enjoy them, perhaps your wife should consider altering the seasonings in a portion of what she prepares to suit you. If she can't do that, she shouldn't blame you for doing it. To each his own.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

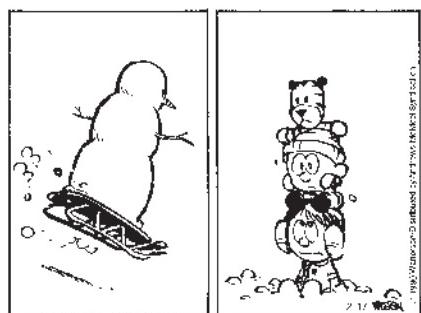
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



**W
U
M
P!**

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®



By Jim Davis



Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	46	Kick out	3	Spanish ayes	26	Actress Falco
1 "Mayday!"	50	— Alto, CA	4	Bankroll	27	Forget-me — (flowers)
4 OED entries	53	Uncivilized	5	Pharmaceutical	28	Carry
7 Heavy reading?	55	Theater award	6	Thread holder	29	Related
11 Send forth	56	"So be it"	7	Seasonal work	30	the Impaler
13 Dadaist artist	57	World Cup	8	Eggs	31	Billboards
14 Wicked	58	Decrease	9	Blend	35	glance
15 Lighten	59	TV's	10	Peyton's brother	38	"Selma" director
16 Pair with an air		"Warrior Princess"	12	Site of Sun Devil Stadium	40	DuVernay Low digit
17 Extra-long	60	Formerly known as	13	2001	42	Noted
18 Groom carefully		61 Feminine principle	19	Standard	2001	bankruptcy
20 Gunk			21	Gut-punch	45	Harvard rival
22 Writer's block?			23	evidence	47	Online auction site
24 Untie	1	Leak out slowly	25	Arias for Sharif	48	New York's Field
28 Small Greek restaurant	2	Actor	one			
32 Tolkien hero	3	Sharif				
33 Tex. neighbor	4					
34 Nabokov novel	5					
36 Landed	6					
37 Royal crown	7					
39 Tales	8					
41 Salad leaf	9					
43 Whatever	10					
44 Madcap						

Solution time: 26 mins.



Last Friday's Answer 02/17

54 Teeny

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Ed Sheeran, 29; Joseph Gordon-Levitt, 39; Billie Joe Armstrong, 48; Denise Richards, 49.

Happy Birthday: Check out all possibilities, but don't try to take on too much. Your strength will be in using your skills masterfully to make a substantial leap forward. Concentrate on what will pay the highest return emotionally, financially and intellectually. Time spent nurturing a partnership will encourage stability as well as help you maintain confidence and freedom to follow your dreams. Your numbers are 3, 14, 17, 23, 28, 34, 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Take the initiative to get things done. Look for ways to physically overcome whatever you don't like about your life. Whether you choose to change your vocation, appearance or how you live, it's up to you to take charge. ★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't wait for someone to do things for you. Whatever you achieve or receive should be your responsibility. Believe in what you have to offer, stick to your plans and partner with people who share your vision. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Show your competitive side when it comes to personal and professional opportunities. Leave nothing to chance, and play to win. Know when to say no, and focus on your success instead of helping someone else get ahead. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Consider a partnership opportunity. Discuss your intentions, share your vision and see who contributes the most. Don't let fear hold you back.

Avoid indulgent behavior or overspending. Monitoring how and when to make a move will help you stabilize an unpredictable situation. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Personal improvements and gains are within reach. Straight talk will help you avoid getting mixed up in someone's business. A trip or creative pursuit will lift your spirits and inspire you to put more effort into achieving your dreams. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Pamper yourself. Enjoy what life has to offer. All work and no play will not be an incentive to get ahead. Some balance will be required if you want to establish a lifestyle that leads to happiness and longevity. Emotional deception is apparent. ★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Too much of anything will lead to uncertainty. Consider what you want, and do your best to make it happen. Your happiness is your responsibility, not someone else's. Aim to feel good about yourself, your life and your future. ★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Share ideas, and expand your interests, friendships and plans for the future. A unique connection will encourage you to try something new. Travel and personal growth are favored. Invest more time and money in honing your skills. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Meddlers will slow you down. Be secretive regarding your plans until you have everything in place and are ready to present. Expect someone who is threatened by you or jealous of you to cause an emotional scene. Keep your distance, and do your own thing. ★★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Ask, and you shall receive. You don't have to do everything on your own to prosper. Use what's already in place, then add your fingerprint. A creative idea will lead to greater prosperity. Trust your gut, not your emotions. ★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Look for alternatives when faced with a set-

back. Using your intellect and your imagination will help gain ground. Do what comes naturally, and you will find it easier to get ahead. Embrace the unknown instead of running away. ★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Be open to new ideas, people and unfamiliar places. Consider the risk factor involved in any situation you take on, and make decisions that will not compromise your integrity, beliefs or a relationship that is essential to you. Think before you take action. ★★★

Birthday Baby: You are aggressive, fearless and playful. You are curious and helpful.

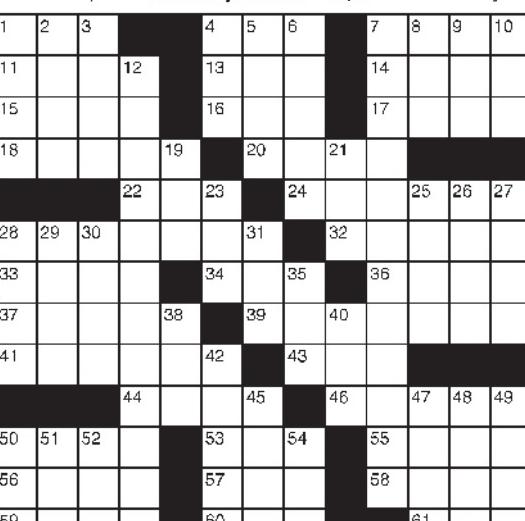
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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

9		1		3		6
	2		5			
6		3	7		1	
	8		2	6		5
	7			1		
2	6	8			9	
	1		6	7		2
		4		7		
7	9		3		4	

Difficulty Level ★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

2	8	1	7	9	5	3	6	4
7	6	9	4	3	2	8	5	1
4	5	3	1	6	8	9	7	2
5	3	7	9	8	4	2	1	6
9	1	4	2	7	6	5	3	8
6	2	8	3	5	1	7	4	9
1	7	5	6	2	9	4	8	3
3	9	6	8	4	7	1	2	5
8	4	2	5	1	3	6	9	7

Difficulty Level ★★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUVELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically and diagonally and even backwords. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

CAUTION, IT'S HOT!

Solution: 7 letters

S	B	O	T	T	L	E	P	B	U	B	B	L	E	
H	I	E	T	U	A	S	R	O	D	B	L	E	E	
C	O	M	A	K	E	R	O	S	U	W	N	L	C	
S	H	T	M	I	M	T	T	A	D	R	L	A	O	
D	N	I	K	E	A	W	E	T	S	I	F	I	S	
L	R	O	L	T	R	U	C	K	R	L	Z	G	T	
A	O	O	O	I	K	U	T	S	S	L	N	E	C	
C	C	P	P	D	S	A	T	S	M	I	I	N	F	
S	L	E	B	A	L	O	E	A	Y	R	I	A	L	
N	T	(A)	E	H	V	E	E	T	R	O	G	F	C	
E	L	T	T	E	K	T	S	F	S	E	R	F	O	
V	N	O	T	A	S	G	U	M	P	A	P	U	F	
O	R													

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WHATZIT?

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Bridges, Zion lead US over World in Rising Stars Challenge

CHICAGO (AP)—Miles Bridges soared like his boss in Chicago. Zion Williamson delivered his share of punishing dunks, even damaging the rim.

It all added up to a high-flying start to the All-Star weekend.

Bridges scored 20 points and took MVP honors, Eric Paschall added 23 more and the U.S. beat the World 151-131 in the Rising Stars Challenge on Friday night.

JAMMING

Bridges has been a bright spot for Charlotte in a difficult season. The Hornets are 11th in the Eastern Conference at 18-36. But the second-year pro put on a show in owner Michael Jordan's old home and was presented the MVP trophy by Hall of Famer and Chicago product Isiah Thomas.

"We wanted to come out and play hard in the Rising Stars and show what Charlotte is about—me, Devonte' (Graham) and P.J. (Washington)," Bridges said. "And that's what we did. I didn't have any extra motivation, really, I wouldn't say that. But MJ putting Chicago on the map, it definitely plays a big part, though."

Cleveland's Collin Sexton had 21 points, Atlanta All-Star Trae Young added 18 and Chicago product Kendrick Young of Miami chipped in with 16. Williamson scored 14 and had the baskets inside the United Center shaking whether he made or missed.

CHICAGO (AP)—Kobe Bryant always seemed to be in top form when he stepped onto the court for the NBA All-Star Game. The league's current best will try to match his effort when Team LeBron and Team Giannis meet on Sunday.

The All-Star festivities returned to Chicago for the first time since 1988 when Michael Jordan beat Dominique Wilkins in a slam dunk contest that remains the standard and scored 40 points to lead the East over the West.

But Bryant is casting a huge shadow over the events this weekend, just weeks after he and his 13-year-old daughter Gianna were among nine people killed when their helicopter crashed into the side of a mountain near Los Angeles.

Commissioner Adam Silver announced Saturday night that the All-Star Game MVP award has been renamed in Bryant's memory.

"We know that he's watching over us," the Lakers' LeBron James said. "It's our responsibility to just represent the purple and gold not only for him but for all the greats,

RJ Barrett of New York led the World with 27 points, and Memphis' Brandon Clarke scored 22.

The annual showcase of the top rookies and second-year players helped kick off the first All-Star weekend in the Windy City since 1988, when Jordan dazzled the home crowd at the old Chicago Stadium. Back then, His Airness edged Dominique Wilkins in a slam dunk

contest that arguably remains the standard and scored 40 points to lead the East over the West in the game.



Team USA forward Zion Williamson, of the New Orleans Pelicans, dunks against during the second half against Team World in the NBA Rising Stars basketball game in Chicago, Friday, Feb. 14, 2020. AP

his legs and off the glass only to miss again.

KOBE TRIBUTE

On Friday, Kobe Bryant's presence loomed large.

Players wore patches featuring the numbers 2 and 24 surrounded by nine stars in honor of the Lakers great and his daughter, Gianna, who were among nine people killed in a helicopter crash on Jan. 26. Pau Gasol along with WNBA great Sue Bird addressed the crowd at midcourt as part of a pregame tribute to Gasol's former teammate and late NBA Commissioner David Stern.

Bryant also headlined a class of eight Hall of Fame finalists announced Friday, along with Kevin Garnett and Tim Duncan.

As for the game, itself? As expected, there were plenty of flashy dunks and not much in the way of defense.

Dallas All-Star Luka Doncic drew a big roar from the crowd when he banked a 3 from halfcourt just before the halftime buzzer to send the World to the locker room with an 81-71 lead. Bridges had the fans cheering late in the third quarter when he flipped the ball off the glass and jammed it during the quarter when the U.S. took control.

Bryant casts shadow as NBA's best meet in All-Star Game

everybody that's ever come through the Lake Show. I really don't want to sit up here and talk about it too much. It's a very, very sensitive subject, but he's with us every day."

Bryant played on five NBA championship teams, won a league MVP award and two scoring titles in a career that spanned 20 seasons and has him poised to enter the Hall of Fame after he was announced Friday as one of eight finalists.

He was the youngest All-Star in league history, ranks second with 18 selections and took game MVP honors a record-tying four times, including on his home court in 2011 when he dazzled with 37 points and 14 rebounds. Bryant scored 20 or more seven times.

"The whole thing of paying respect to Kobe is awesome, so I think it's going to be fun," said Toronto's Kyle Lowry, making his sixth straight All-Star appearance. "I'm hoping it's really, really intense. Hopefully, we'll give the fans one of the best All-

Star Games ever."

Here are some things to know:

THE MATCHUP

James is looking to go 3-0 as an All-Star captain, after his team beat the one picked by Golden State's Stephen Curry in 2018 and topped the one Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo selected last year. James had the No. 1 overall pick for the starters round because he received the most votes from the fans and took teammate Anthony Davis.

Antetokounmpo used his first pick on Philadelphia's Joel Embiid.

The Clippers' Kawhi Leonard, Houston's James Harden and Russell Westbrook, and Dallas' Luka Doncic were among the players joining Davis on James' team.

Toronto's Pascal Siakam, Boston's Kemba Walker, Atlanta's Trae Young and Miami's Jimmy Butler helped round out Team Giannis.

"I'm just competitive, and

I'm just going to try to go out there and get a win, get my first All-Star (win)," Antetokounmpo said. "I'm 0-3 so far. But at the end of the day, I've just got to keep a smile on my face because we've got to put on a show for the people."

NEW RULES

The league announced major changes to the All-Star format last month, turning quarters into mini-games.

The scores will be reset back to 0-0 prior to the second and third quarters, then be reinstated for the fourth. The All-Star game winner will be determined by a target score, set by the combined point total the team in the lead had in the first three quarters plus 24—a nod to Bryant, who wore that number over the final decade of his career. That's just one of multiple tributes to him over the weekend.

The teams are also playing for Chicago-area charities, with at least \$500,000 going to local organizations.

PAYING TRIBUTE

The support for Bryant and his daughter is uniform.

Team Giannis will wear No. 24 on its jerseys and Team LeBron No. 2 for Gianna, a promising player who wore that number.

All participants in the Rising Stars Challenge on Friday and 3-point, slam dunk and skills competition on Saturday wore patches showing the numbers 24 and 2 and nine stars to commemorate the victims of the helicopter crash. The patches worn Sunday will only have the nine stars since players will be wearing the numbers 24 and 2.

"He was the Michael Jordan of our generation," Antetokounmpo said. "He was one of those guys that gave back to the game so much, gave back to the players. A lot of people when they're so great, they don't do that. There was a quote that said that talent is worthless if you're not willing to share it, right? And he was one of

those guys that was sharing his talent with us. He's going to be definitely missed."

HOMECOMING

Davis, a Chicago product, won't be the only player in familiar territory. Butler will be playing where his career began.

Unheralded as a late first-round pick, he emerged as an All-Star and one of the league's best two-way players in his six seasons with the Bulls before getting dealt to Minnesota in a 2017 draft day trade.

"Man, this city's done a lot for me," Butler said. "To me, kids are so important, and I love this city. So every time I come back, I try to do as much as I can with them."

INTERNATIONAL FLAIR

With eight non-Americans suiting up, the game will have an international flair. Greece (Antetokounmpo), Slovenia (Dončić), Serbia (Nikola Jokić), Lithuania (Domantas Sabonis), Australia (Ben Simmons), Cameroon (Joel Embiid, Pascal Siakam) and France (Rudy Gobert) will be represented.

Baker to MLB: Tell teams to ‘stop the comments’ on Astros



WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.

(AP)—Dusty

Baker wants action from Major League Baseball: End the criticism of the Astros from across baseball over sign stealing, and take steps to ensure pitchers don't throw at his players.

"It's not good for the game, it's not good for kids to see it, so I think both," the new Houston manager said Saturday. "Stop the comments and also stop something before it happens."

Baker spoke in response to a wave of harsh comments during spring training about the Astros' use of video to steal signs in 2017 and 2018. Los Angeles Dodger first baseman Cody Bellinger said Friday the Astros "stole" the 2017 World Series title from them and adds that Jose Altuve did likewise with the MVP, denying the Yankees' Aaron Judge.

Houston players, management and ownership spent the first day of camp apologizing for their actions and professing remorse. But many players and front offices around the league didn't feel they went far enough.

Washington general manager Mike Rizzo said he wanted to hear the Astros use the word "cheated" when addressing the situation.

"I'm depending on the league to try to put a stop to the seemingly premeditated retaliation that I'm hearing about," Baker said. "In most instances in life you get kind of reprimanded for when you



AP

Houston Astros manager Dusty Baker, left, talks with pitcher Chris Devenski during spring training baseball practice Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in West Palm Beach, Fla.

have premeditated anything."

Dodgers pitcher Ross Stripling indicated he might intentionally throw at Houston batters if he faced them.

"We don't start nothing," Baker said. "This is kind of the slogan of my team: We

don't start anything — not in-

tentionally. Guys are going to be getting hit intentionally and unintentionally. If you say you are going to drill somebody and all of the sudden you drill them, you can't say, 'I wasn't trying to hit them,' you know

what I mean?"

Cubs star Kris Bryant said he expects teams to throw at Houston hitters, adding that players involved in the scandal "absolutely" should have been punished.

"They're going to have a

tough year this year for sure. I got booed really loud in St. Louis, and they're going to get ... wow, everywhere they go, rightfully so," Bryant said at Chicago's camp in Mesa, Arizona. "I'm sure they will (get hit by pitches). Pitchers aren't happy about it."

"Obviously you don't want anybody getting hurt but I think if teams are going about it the right way, if you do get hit you're not going after people's heads and stuff like that, I definitely think they're going to experience some of that this year," he said.

Houston ace Justin Verlander expects the commissioner's office to severely punish retaliation.

"The game has changed," Verlander said. "I think the commissioner has made it very clear in the past few seasons that throwing a baseball at somebody intentionally isn't an appropriate form of retaliation in the game any longer."

Verlander also said it is "wrong" to speculate that the Astros, specifically Altuve, used buzzers as part of the sign stealing.

"We were successful in the World Series last year. All that stuff about buzzers and all that stuff is simply not true," he said. "People can speculate all they want. We dug our grave. We're in it. I think emphatically everybody made it very clear that that wasn't true."

Outfielder George Springer

declined to speak with the media before Saturday's workout. Altuve was not in the clubhouse during the time it was open to the media but through a spokesman also declined to comment on Bellinger's remarks. Position players don't begin their first official workouts until Monday.

Verlander is concerned about the respect the Astros have lost around the league. However, he expects more revelations about sign stealing by other teams to emerge.

"Yeah, it bothers me," he said. "But like I said, (Bellinger's) entitled and everybody else is entitled to their own opinion. I think facts are still coming out, information's still coming out, and I don't think this is going to be something that's done — not even for us. There's going to be information that's going to continue coming out for a long time."

Could the Dodgers be one of those teams?

"I don't want to insinuate about other organizations," Verlander said. "The other day we apologized about what we did."

Verlander also confirmed the Astros' explanation from Friday about his reason for skipping a scheduled bullpen session.

"I threw an extensive bullpen the day before we started," he said. "Just wanted to give myself a little time to recover after that."

War of words on Astros scandal now involves partial tattoo

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—The verbal sparring between the Houston Astros and others around the majors over the team's sign-stealing scandal is reaching new levels of absurdity — from accusations of illiteracy to claims about a player's partial tattoo.

Yes, really.

And spring training is only a few days old. Imagine what things might be like once the Astros start playing games.

Houston shortstop Carlos Correa took his turn escalating the situation to something a professional wrestling fan might appreciate, going after Los Angeles Dodgers star Cody Bellinger on Saturday for the reigning NL MVP's recriminations.

In an interview with MLB Network, Correa responded to Bellinger's barbs from a day earlier by saying: "The problem I have is when players go out there and they don't know the facts, they're not informed on the situation and they just go out there in front of cameras and just talk.

And with me, that doesn't sit right. Doesn't sit right at all."

Correa went on: "He either doesn't know how to read, is really bad at reading comprehension or is just not informed at all."

At Dodgers camp in Glendale, Arizona, a few players watched Correa's interview on televisions in LA's clubhouse.

Los Angeles closer Kenley Jansen, for one, is growing tired of hearing about the whole thing and would rather just forget what happened in 2017.

He called what the Astros did worse than baseball's steroids and gambling scandals of the past and offered up a suggestion for a way Major League Baseball could have penalized Houston.

"Let them play the season," Jansen said, "but ban them for the postseason this year."

And round and round it goes.

On Friday, Bellinger said the Astros "were cheating for three years" and called out second baseman José Altuve

in particular.

"I think what people don't realize is Altuve stole an MVP from (Yankees outfielder Aaron) Judge in '17. Everyone knows they stole the ring from us," Bellinger said.

Commissioner Rob Manfred fined the Astros, took away draft picks and suspended manager AJ Hinch and GM Jeff Luhnow, who both were then fired by Houston.

An MLB investigation said Houston used a video feed to view and decode opposing catchers' signs, then banged on a garbage can to signal to batters what pitch was coming, during the 2017 and 2018 seasons. In the first of those years, Correa's Astros beat Bellinger's Dodgers in the World Series.

"Cody didn't have a good World Series. So for him to be talking about us 'stealing that championship,' don't talk about it," Correa said. "You should not be talking about it. You should have done something about it."

Last season, the Astros lost in the Fall Classic to

the Washington Nationals, whose general manager, Mike Rizzo, said Friday he hadn't heard a proper apology from Houston.

One of Correa's points Saturday was that Altuve -- along with teammates Josh Reddick, Tony Kemp -- did not want help from the noise made by hitting a trash can.

Another point? That Altuve didn't want his teammates to rip off his jersey after a walk-off homer against the Yankees in the 2019 ALCS for two reasons: Altuve's wife didn't like it when his shirt got removed, and, in Correa's words, "He's got an unfinished tattoo on his collarbone ... that honestly looked terrible. It was a bad tattoo, and he didn't want nobody to see it. He didn't want to show it at all."

Bellinger had surmised that Altuve didn't want the shirt removed because he was hiding a buzzer to receive signals about what pitch might be coming.

"Nobody wore buzzers" in 2019, Correa said.

McIlroy, Scott, Kuchar share lead at Riviera; Woods falters

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Put together the best field of the year on a course players regard as one of the ultimate tests, and the result is a final round at Riviera loaded with possibilities.

Rory McIlroy kept patient through some missed opportunities by making enough birdies for a 3-under 68. Adam Scott, motivated to get a victory at Riviera that the PGA Tour counts, rolled in a 10-foot birdie putt on the final hole Saturday for a 67. Matt Kuchar recovered from three bogeys in a four-hole stretch to make one last birdie for a 70.

They were tied for the lead at the Genesis Invitational.

Within striking distance was Dustin Johnson, who overwhelmed Riviera in 2017 for a five-shot victory that could have been more, finished birdie-eagle-par for a 67 and was two shots behind.

Sixteen players were separated by four shots with 18 holes to play.

"I think you just have to worry about yourself, concentrate on what you're doing, do it well, set yourself a target, don't think about anyone else," McIlroy said. "And you know, if that's good enough at the end of the day, then great. If not, then someone just played better than you and hats off to them."

McIlroy returned to No. 1 in the world this week and is playing as though he plans to stay there. This was his 17th time in his last 18 rounds on the PGA Tour that he shot in the 60s dating to his victory in the Tour Championship.

Kuchar has led since a 64 in the opening round, and now he shares it with McIlroy and Scott, two players who have won majors and reached No. 1 in the world.

They were at 10-under 203.

Missing from the mix was Tiger Woods, who went the other direction, and quickly. He shot 41 on the back nine and held it steady from there for a



AP

Rory McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, hits his second shot on the second hole during the third round of the Genesis Invitational golf tournament at Riviera Country Club, Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020, in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles.

76 to wind up 15 shots behind.

"Well, that was a lot of shots ... and it was a long day," Woods said.

Scott won at Riviera in 2005 and has the trophy to show for it, just not a spot in the PGA Tour record book. The tournament was shortened to 36 holes by rain, and it was deemed unofficial.

This is his first competition in some two months, dating to his victory in the Australian PGA Championship three days before Christmas.

"I almost feel like I know what I'm doing after 20 years of having a season and having a break and com-

ing back out," Scott said. "I know what this course kind of demands of you. It's not necessarily the easiest course to show up, but I was in a good place finishing last year, too, so I think I managed that well."

Harold Varner III birdied his last two holes for a 69 and was one shot behind, along with Russell Henley (68). Dustin Johnson, who won at Riviera three years ago, had only two pars over his final 12 holes. That stretch also featured five birdies and an eagle for a 67. He was two shots behind, along with Joel Dahmen (66).

Still in the mix was Hideki

Matsuyama, who bogeyed his last hole Friday and was the last player to make the cut. Matsuyama played in the final group off the back nine, away from all the attention, and posted a 64. He was four shots behind and very much in the picture.

Woods will have to wait another year to win at Riviera, another week to seek his record 83rd victory on the PGA Tour. In a spot where he couldn't afford to drop shots, he made more mistakes than he had all week, especially on the greens.

He four-putted from 18 feet

on No. 13, his second four-putt in as many tournaments this year and the first times since 1998 that Woods had multiple tournaments with a four-putt. He three-putted the 17th for par. He finished with a three-putt bogey from about 12 feet on the 18th.

It added up to a 76, leaving him at the bottom of the pack. It was his highest score since he opened with an 81 at Royal Portrush in the British Open last summer, and the first time since the PGA Championship in May that Woods had consecutive rounds over par.

"I hit the ball quite a few times, especially on the

greens," Woods said. "I didn't have a feel for it, I didn't see my lines, I couldn't feel my pace and I was just off ... Obviously, there wasn't a whole lot I did right today, and figure it out tomorrow."

Woods said he wasn't ready for the Mexico Championship next week and was not sure when he would play next. The idea is to peak for the Masters, still about two months away.

Woods wasn't alone in his struggles. Sung Kang missed a 2-foot putt during a stretch of three straight bogeys. Ryan Palmer took six shots to get out of a greenside bunker on No. 14 and made 9.

By TOM WITHERS and
WILL GRAVES
ASSOCIATED PRESS



The agent for Steelers quarterback Mason Rudolph says Cleveland defensive end Myles Garrett opened himself up for potential legal action after reiterating his claim that Rudolph used a racial slur shortly before their infamous brawl in November.

During an interview with ESPN, his first since being hit with a suspension after slugging Rudolph in the head with Rudolph's own helmet in the

Rudolph's agent: Garrett legally liable after ESPN interview

final seconds of a Browns win on Nov. 14, Garrett said Rudolph called the defensive end "the N-word."

Rudolph, as he did when Garrett made the claim while appealing the suspension in November, called the allegation "a disgusting and reckless attempt to assassinate my character." Tim Younger, Rudolph's agent, went a step further. Because Garrett conducted the interview in California, Younger said Garrett's "defamatory statement" has now exposed the former No. 1 pick to "legal liability."

Pittsburgh coach Mike Tomlin also came to Rudolph's defense. Tomlin said he interacted with "a lot" of people within the Browns' organization in the aftermath of the fight and that no player or coach indicated there was a racial element to the incident.

"In my conversations (with the Browns), I had a lot of sorrow for what transpired," Tomlin said in a statement.

The NFL said there was no evidence of Rudolph using a slur when it handed out an indefinite suspension to Garrett, a suspension which ended

when he was reinstated earlier this week. Garrett, however, hinted the league may know more that it has revealed.

"Most quarterbacks wear mics in their helmets. He somehow lost his helmet and had to get another one without a mic," Garrett told ESPN. "There were guys who were mic'd up near me — near us — during that time who didn't hear anything. And from what I've heard, there have been audio during that game that could have heard something or could not have heard something, but they don't want to say. So,

something was said. I know something was said and whether the NFL wants to acknowledge it, that's up to them."

NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy referred to the league's original finding in an email to The Associated Press on Friday.

"As we said at the time the allegation was made, we looked into the matter and found no such evidence," said McCarthy. "There was no sound recorded from the field during that game. As with every game, there were microphones on the center or interior linemen that help amplify the

ambient sound as the quarterbacks were calling signals at the line of scrimmage. But they do not record sound. Microphones are opened from the break of the huddle (or when the center places his hand on the ball in a no-huddle offense) through the snap of the ball."

Although Garrett insists Rudolph used the slur to provoke, the former No. 1 overall draft pick wants to put the incident behind him.

"But I don't want to make it a racial thing, honestly," he said. "It's over with for me and I am pretty sure it's over with for Mason, so we just move past that and keep on playing football."

Islander Rent A Car nips Eats Easy

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

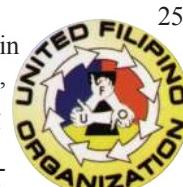
Islander Rent A Car edged Eats Easy-The Game in their matchup in the open division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Mark Mintac scored a bucket with 1.7 seconds remaining in the game clock to secure a heart-pounding 95-93 victory against Eats Easy-The Game. Moments earlier Arnold Arellano tied the score at 93-all with a basket of his own down to 3.5 seconds, but it proved to be for naught as Mintac again saved the day for Islander Rent A Car, which improved to 7-2 in the win-loss column, while Eats Easy-The Game dropped to 5-4.

Ken Viray was named player of the game after leading Islander Rent A Car with 23 points. Mintac was not far behind with 22 of his own. Arellano paced Eats Easy-The Game in the loss with his 19 buckets, while Jun Fidelino and Joe Sablan added 15 apiece.

In the first game in the masters division, Jun Tabora exploded for 24 points as JSN escaped with an 81-76 victory against Gilas Batang.

It was the seventh win in nine outings for JSN, while the loss was the fourth in nine for Gilas Batang. Teng Alegre and Alex Ocampo scored 13 and 10 points, respectively, in support of Tabora, who was named



best player of the contest. Gilas Batang was led by the 25 points of Dick Tibayan, while John Jugos added 12—all from the land of plenty.

The last game of the trifecta last Saturday saw Saimar Pilot raise its record to 6-3 following a default win over the now 3-6 Islander Rent A Car in the masters division.

Last Thursday, PPG Paint leaned again on the hot hands of player of the game Sony Ebuen to defeat Islander

loured by Arman Rechucher (15:54.31) and Tristan Raho (15:59.64).

In the women's race, Sari Barman was the first out of the water with his 15:05.29. Nagisa Litulumar (15:91.21) and Jessica Ma (15:54.07) followed.

In the short 50m race from the beach to the first buoy, Kanoa Owens (1:10.31) topped the boys with Mechael Rechucher (1:25.43) and Teagan Wright (1:23.00) next. In the girls, Maria Guerrero (1:11.17), Shana Barman (1:12.05), and Stella Choi (1:16.13) finished 1-2-3.

Introduced by former SSC coach Michael Stewart about 14 years ago, the Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim refers to the 5K swim as the "Might" and the 1K swim as the "Meek."

Rough waters preceded days before the race that made SSC coach Richard Sikkel check out the event site a couple times for safety reasons.

For more information on the Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim or the SSC, email saipanswimclub@gmail.com or message them on their Facebook page.



MARK RABAGO
Eats Easy-The Game's Jun Javier goes up against Islander Rent A Car's Rocyl Ritual in their matchup in the open division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Rent A Car, 78-63, in the masters division.

Joseph Galulu also scored in double figures for PPG Paint, which now sports a 2-7 win-loss card, as opposed to the 3-5 record of Islander Rent A Car, which was led by the 13 points of Fradel Sedillo.

The other game last Thursday saw Pacific Islands Club Saipan finally earn a win in the masters division. This, after

league-leading Blue Eagles A+ Consultant only showed up with four players. It was the first win against seven losses for PIC, while Blue Eagles absorbed its very first loss after eight games and derailed what could've been a perfect season.

Thursday

PPG Paint 78 – Ebuen 16, Galulu 13, Elchico 11, San Diego 10, Dela Cruz 9, Alegre 8,

RACE

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rocks. It's hard to concentrate. But I managed well... It was tough but I had fun and I'm happy I won," the 14-year-old said.

Coming in second in the women's open field was Kriz Gozon with her 2:48.31.

The 49-year-old Bob said the 2020 Pika Bike Race could be one of the toughest races he has ever competed in.

"The competition was tough for me. I got into an accident and it was a bloody race for me. But thank God I survived it. I'm so proud of J.C. that she managed it well in spite of the

conditions," he said.

Bob said the use of gravel to fill in some of the potholes made the course more dangerous as the smaller rocks made the road slippery that more than likely caused his accident in the latter part of the race.

"It was windy during the race, but the condition was almost perfect. The most challenging part of the race was the rough road. Using a road bike was hard because there's plenty of gravel and small stones on the road," he said.

In the men's MTB division, Nap Dizon blazed the trail with a time of 1:55.26, followed by Noel Altamirano and Jaco Sa-

She thanked God, her family, especially her parents, the International Tennis Federation, and coaches Roxanne Clarke, Thomas Perrin, and Tito Bira for molding her to the person and tennis player she is today.

Asked about her secret to honing her tennis skills to a point where she was able to get a full-ride scholarship to a Division I school in the U.S., Lee said one just has to work hard.

"The message I want to share with the athletes out there who aspire to go to Division I on a

Salazar 4, Moreno 4, Samson 3.

Islander Rent A Car 63 – Sedillo 13, Ritual 11, Umali 7, Banangale 6, Mostales 5, Bautista 4, Tenorio 2, Dayrit 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-16, 33-24, 66-47, 78-63.

Saturday

JSN 81 – J. Tabora 24, Alegre 13, Ocampo 10, Mungcal 7, Jacap 6, Garcia 2.

Gilas Batang 76 – D. Tibayan 25, Jugos 12, Basa 4, David

4, Wilchico 4, Sanguy 2.

Scoring by quarters: 22-14, 40-29, 61-41, 81-76.

Islander Rent A Car 95 – Viray 23, Mintac 22, Mangali 9, Atikapua 7, Pastrana 6, Andrew 4, Torres 2, Ritual 2.

Eats Easy-The Game 93 – Arellano 19, Fidelino 15, Sablan 15, Factor 10, Del Rosario 4.

Scoring by quarters: 15-14 39-35, 66-61, 95-93.

with her 2:29.53.

In the 46 and above division, Cesar Fortaleza took the plum with his 1:44.35 with Floro Drexes and Willy Barbo coming in second and third with times of 1:53.11 and 1:55.26, respectively.

Bikers Association of Tinian president Don Sarmiento said they would like to thank the sponsors of the 50K Pika Bike Race, namely the Marianas Visitors Authority, Tinian Mayor's Office, and The Bike Shop.

The 50K Pika Bike Race was held in conjunction with last weekend's San Jose Fiesta on Tinian.

Lee said she first picked up a tennis racquet when she was 6 years old and that her father, Lee Dong Min, basically served as her coach during her formative years.

"After I was watching my dad play at the American Memorial Park tennis courts with his local and Filipino friends, I thought it was a fun sport and was interested. I wanted to compete and win," she said.

Growing up, Lee said she looked up to Serena Williams and Roger Federer and wanted to be like them.

SUZUKI

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Asaka and also about Jinie because I wanted to beat them so I can get at least a place," said the 13-year-old Litulumar, who goes to Hopwood Middle School.

Big things coming in small packages was the theme in the intermediate 3K swim, as Kouki Watanabe and Maria Corazon Batallones reigned supreme with times of 33:07.09 and 37:14.59, respectively.

MHS teacher and former SSC coach Jacoby Winkfield came in second in the men's division with a time of 40:46.41, while Andrew Nunez came in the third with his 43:07.12.

In the women's, Saipan Community School teacher and SSC assistant coach Sarah Vander Wal came in second with her time of 42:42.21 with Savita Sikkel finishing third with a 42:51.13.

In Meek division, Justin Ma topped the 1K race for men with his time of 14:59.36 fol-

CAROL

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The people are diverse and I liked how people came internationally, like Saipan."

Lee, who is from Chalan Kanoa, said she will have to complete her high school units first before she can pursue her lifelong dream of playing Division I tennis at Georgia Tech.

"I am not sure when I will go, but I am [looking at] going this year in the Fall. I will be majoring in business."



Bridges, Zion
lead U.S. over
World in Rising
Stars Challenge

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Baker to MLB:
Tell teams
to 'stop the
comments' on
Astros

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Suzuki, Litulumar top Meek & Mighty

By MARK RABAGO
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The weather finally cooperated in last Saturday's 2020 Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim held in the waters off Kanoa Resort in Susupe and that bode well for Jinnosuke Suzuki, Shoko Litulumar, and other winners of the open water swim.

Suzuki and Litulumar, both of Swimming Center Tsunami Saipan, won the men's and women's divisions of the 5K race with times of 51:23.06 and 1:00:27.26, respectively.

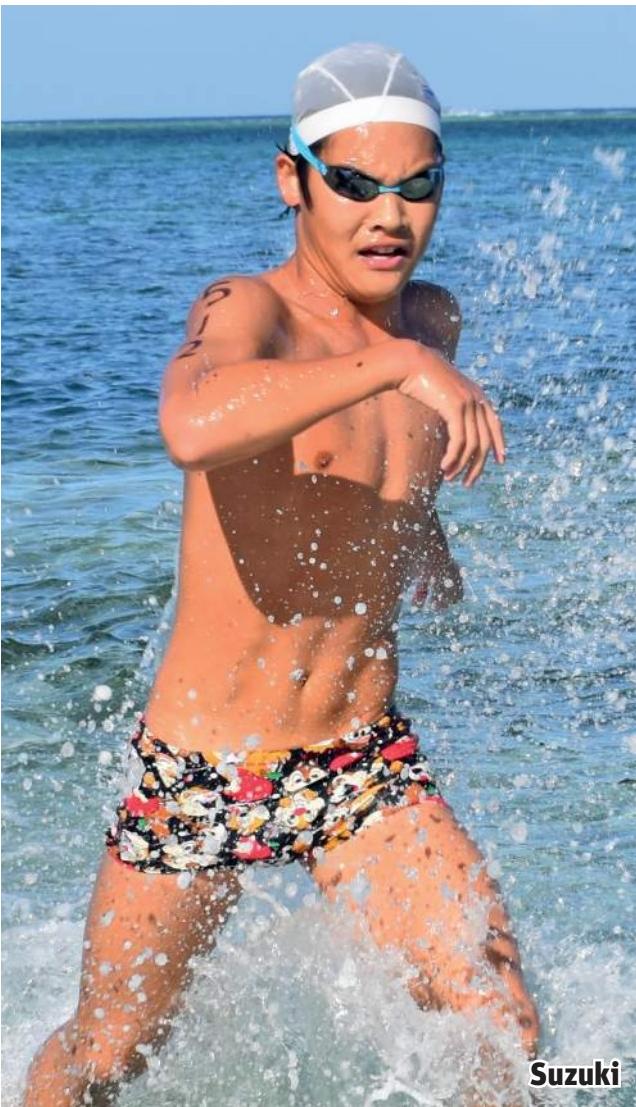


"It was harder than I thought. The waves were kind of strong. It was a surprise winning the race as the hardest part was swimming against the current," Suzuki, a 14-year-old Marianas High



Bob and J.C. Ferrer are all smiles atop the winners' podium after topping 50K Pika Bike Race last Saturday on Tinian.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Suzuki



Litulumar

School student, said during a short interview after the event.

Another Tsunami Saipan swimmer, Isaiah Alekseenko, finished second to Suzuki with his 53:29.76, followed by Nelson Jay A. Batallones with his

59:11.96.

Like Suzuki, Litulumar wasn't expecting to win the longest race of the Meek & Mighty Ocean Swim.

"I was expecting second but not first. The hardest part was

going against the waves while swimming on to the second buoy. I was concerned about my sister because I was trying to beat her," she said alluding to Asaka, who came in second in the division with a time of

1:00.29.18. Jinie Thompson of Saipan Swim Club finished third with her time of 1:01.56.52.

"I was concerned about

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Carol chooses Georgia Tech

By MARK RABAGO
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CNMI tennis standout Carol Lee will play NCAA Division I tennis after picking Georgia Institute of Technology—or simply Georgia Tech—as the college she will enroll in this Fall semester.



The 18-year-old daughter of Lee Dong Min and Lee Eunkyoung said she will be getting a full-ride scholarship at Georgia Tech and that she's very excited to becoming a Yellow Jacket, the university's moniker.

"The assistant coach contacted me and messaged me that their school was interested in having me for their tennis team and they wanted to recruit me to check out their school. They also offered

me a full ride. I am really excited and thrilled to compete in Division I tennis," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

The 5'8" Lee said she can't wait to further develop her tennis game both physically and mentally and at the same time earn a college degree. She intimated that Georgia Tech was not the only Division I school after her.

"Other schools sounded great for me, but when I visited Georgia Tech during their fall season, there were many greens and I liked it. I also liked how the coaches train the girls. I feel comfortable with the coaches and I can trust them. The girls were really nice to me and I liked their vibe. I can imagine myself being with them and having fun as a team."

See CAROL on Page 27



MARK RABAGO

Carol Lee in action against Robbie Schorr in the boys U18 finals of the SIS tennis tourney earlier this month at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan tennis courts in Garapan.

Father-daughter pair tops Pika Bike Race

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Bob and J.C. Ferrer won the men's and women's open division of last Saturday's 50K Pika Bike Race on Tinian, the first father-and-daughter pair to achieve such a feat.

The elder Ferrer finished the 50-kilometer race from Kammer Beach to Suicide Cliff to North Field then back to Kammer Beach in 1:43.44, narrowly beating Mark Isip who came in at 1:43.45. Third place went to Joel Buco (1:44.01).

Bob could've finished earlier if not for a nasty spill he encountered as he was fin-

ishing the race.

"The race was very tough because of the road conditions. There were a lot of potholes you need to avoid in order to maintain your speed," the C&R Corp. sales manager said when reached by *Saipan Tribune* via social message.

J.C., meanwhile, crossed the finish line in 1:55.20. Like her father, the 8th grader from Tanapag Middle School said the conditions on the bike race were less than ideal.

"I had a hard time with the road. I'm using a road bike so it's hard to maneuver on potholes and lots of small

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